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Modern Christianity

Or

The Plain Gospel Modernly Expounded

By

John P. Peters, Ph.D., Sc.D., D.D.

Rector of St. Michael's Church, New York
and
Canon Residentiary of the Cathedral of St. John the Divine

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Dedicated

To the Memory of my
Revered and Beloved Father in God,
Rt. Rev. Henry Codman Potter, D.D., LL.D.,
Late Bishop of New York

School of Theology
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FOREWORD

THIS volume is not published at the request of those to whom the sermons herein contained were preached, as, judging from their prefaces, is usually the case with volumes of printed sermons. It is published so as to preserve, in a form more permanent than the spoken word, certain things which I have felt moved to utter, which do not seem to me to have been altogether said by others. The sermons here published do not formally constitute a body of theology, but they have been selected and arranged with a view to presenting, in some sort of sequence, and with some regard to the due proportion of emphasis, the essentials of Christianity—the Incarnation, the Resurrection, the Ascension, and the re-incarnation, if I may so put it, of the spirit of Jesus in His followers. I think I may claim that the doctrine expressed in these sermons is ancient, orthodox, and Catholic; but the mode of statement is modern, and the emphasis doubtless different from that to which some of my hoped for readers are accustomed. Not myself a good reader of sermons, nor even always a good listener, I have hesitated long in publishing my material in sermon form; but after careful consideration I have concluded that it will be on the whole more intelligible to and more readable by my desired public in this form than if rewritten as a theological or ethical

treatise, under some such title perhaps as *A Modern Interpretation of Christianity*. Accordingly, these sermons are presented to the outside world almost in the form in which they were originally spoken to my own people in St. Michael's Church or the Cathedral of St. John the Divine. I have described these sermons as "orthodox"; but I apprehend that because of their very orthodoxy some of them may sound radical, if not revolutionary. Especially, I fear, will this be the case with the series of addresses contained in the second part of the volume, which are a literal, not a conventional, interpretation of our Lord's social teaching by one who is technically a Bible scholar rather than a theologian.

JOHN P. PETERS.

ST. MICHAEL'S CHURCH, NEW YORK.
St. John Baptist's Day, 1909.

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PART I

DOCTRINES OF THE CHURCH

THE BIRTH OF GOD

St. Luke ii., 12: Ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger.

THIS was the sign which the angels gave the shepherds, by which they were to know that "unto you is born this day, in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord"; and to you to-day I bring Christmas greetings, tidings of great joy. For the birth of Jesus in the manger, the incarnation of God in that little child, is a declaration of the divinity that is in man, of the glory of God manifested in each new birth of a babe on earth. A babe, poor, naked, helpless, that cannot do a thing for itself, is yet the God and King, before whom men shall bow down and worship. And he who does not recognise that kingship, who cannot bend the knee in reverence there, is unable to know God.

How can that be? How can God be revealed to us in the pathetic helplessness of a baby?

Let us go back to that first Christmas-day, when that baby, whom we call Christ, the Lord, was born in Bethlehem. How was he born? Into the crowded inn came Joseph and Mary, great with child, seeking a place where the child might be born. But none knew that it was God, asking where He might be born. The rooms of the

inn were full of guests and there was no place vacant. From room to room went Joseph, seeking a place for Mary in her need. Here were rooms occupied by merchants with their precious goods, bales of silk from Babylon, spices and perfumes from Arabia and the East; goods, some of which represented a fortune in a camel's load. These must be carefully guarded and protected from the weather. They could not be placed outside among the cattle. Their owners could not make place, for it meant too great a risk of loss, even had they been willing to discommode themselves. To one after another he went and none would give room.

But they were not all heartless: here was one who would give the money to pay some one else to leave his room and give it to the poor woman. For himself, he could not make place, for his goods were in this room and he in the next, that he might guard them well. He was sorry that he could do no more. There were some travellers who had no goods and who were hardened to the weather. They surely would be glad to take the money and make room for the woman.

Not they! They had come a long journey and a hard one. Not a night for weeks had they spent beneath a roof and for many days they had looked forward to this night, when at last they were to sleep under cover and rest in peace and make merry. Let the merchant himself make way, instead of offering money for others to do so. They could not. He slept every night beneath a roof, but they almost never. Their pleasure and comfort were worth as much to them as his goods to him. Let him make way. Or look! there was a man yonder

that always lived in ease and comfort. It would do him good to sleep out for a night. Try him.

And he? No! Expose himself thus? He dare not! He had been brought up used to comfort. Why, he would suffer: no, not he! There were surely others, who were used to sleeping out of doors, who could readily do it, but to him it would be suffering, for he was not used to it.

And here was a man with his wife and children. He had worked hard to get there in time and to get rooms for him and them, that they might have comfort and not be exposed to hardships. Ask him, after he had taken all that pains and trouble for them, to turn them out with no place to go, except the dirty court-yard, full of beasts and cattle, open to the sky above? No! he was too good a husband and too good a father to do that, let me tell you! He would work himself to the bone if need be, but he was going to provide the best there was for his wife and children. If others were careless and shiftless and did not do their part, it was not fit that his wife and his children should suffer for it. Let him go to some one who had no family to take care of. There, right next, was a single man, by himself.

And he? No, he would not make place. It was his right to have a room. He had come in time to get it and no one should take it from him. He was very sorry. He was ready to do his part with every one else, but it was not right that he alone should suffer. He stood on his rights.

Somewhat thus, I imagine, was the story of that night; for men are much the same all the world over. And so it was that God, asking to be born, found no

man ready to make place, for all the rooms were occupied. For their wealth and for their comforts, all stood on their rights and on their privileges. Each thought the other should make place. And so God was born among the beasts of burden in the court-yard, with the sky for a roof, and cradled in a manger. God so loved the world that, though none was ready to make place for Him, yet He would be born among men and into man; but man denied Him and the beasts of burden were His comrades. Born among the beasts, of whom men made slaves for their comfort and convenience, He came, the servant of all mankind, He, God incarnate.

And who first found this King? St. Luke tells the beautiful and mystic tale of the shepherds, who, watching their flocks, saw the vision of the angels, who told them that the Christ for whom men looked was born in Bethlehem, David's town, and gave them, as the only sign, that they should find somewhere there in Bethlehem a baby in swaddling clothes and lying in a manger. The poorest, most needy child that they could find in all that town was the King. That was the sign.

All Israel was looking for the King. Wise men studied the books which prophesied His coming. Scribes and Pharisees and priests, each in his own way, searched for Him. They knew the marks which should distinguish the Christ, a great King, with wonder-working power, testified to by signs from God Himself. Who found Him? In the later story of the Gospels, it was the poor fishermen about the northern end of the Sea of Galilee who recognised Jesus as the Christ. In this mystic story of the birth, it was the shepherds

who knew Him, and they knew Him by this one sign: that His birth was poorer and more miserable than that of any child in Bethlehem.

There is another mystic story which St. Matthew tells of the finding of Christ. It is a parable by which the writer of the Gospel sets forth that the Kingdom should pass from Israel to the Gentiles, because they recognised the Christ, where the Jews failed to do so. It is the story of the magi, who, studying the stars, according to their ancient lore, learned that a great King was born in the west-land, and so travelled westward, following by night the star of the new Prince of Judah which went before them. And so these magi came to the capital of Judah and to the palace of the king to seek the prince that should be King. But the Prince of the kingdom of Heaven was not found in kings' houses. Then Herod sent for the scholars and the doctors of the law, to ask them where the King should be born, and they told him that the King of David's kingdom should be born in David's city, Bethlehem, but more they knew not. For to them the real meaning, the real nature of His kingdom, had not been revealed. Ignorant, simple shepherds had found the King then, as ignorant, simple Galilean fishermen were to find Him later, because the very nature of their life had kept them close to the needs of man. Their own needs and their own wants kept them always tender to the needs and wants of others. They were ready to be brothers in need to one that was in need; and this call of a common humanity kept them close to God.

But these others had learned to place wealth, power,

social distinction, privilege, first, and humanity afterwards. It was not the man, but the wealth, the power, the social station of the man which determined worth. Those things were of more value than the humanity behind. They sought God in those things and not in man himself.

Then the magi went to search in Bethlehem for the child:—the nations of the earth seeking their King in the religion of the Old Testament, finding Him not in the glory of Judah, in the power of David, or the pomp and magnificence of Solomon; finding Him not in the law of Moses or the poetry of the Psalms or the wisdom of Job; but finding Him in Israel stripped of power and prestige, in Israel guileless and helpless among the nations, without land or power, a servant of servants.

And there is the mystery and wonder of this Kingship, and there the meaning of this story. Man finds God, his King and his Saviour, not in those that can give him something, not in rank and power, not in those who impart wisdom to him and give him encouragement, not even in those that show him kindness and love. He finds God, his King and his Saviour, when he has found the one who, in his helplessness and want, needs him. When he has found that one and responded to his appeal, he has found God, his Saviour. Then Jesus, the Christ, is born for him into the world and Christmas-day becomes to him an eternal reality.

God is forever asking a place that He may be born into your life and into mine. Mary, great with child, seeks a room in your life and in mine, in which Jesus Christ may have His cradle. And too often we are blind as the men of that inn were blind. The rooms

of our hearts are filled, as were the rooms of the inn at Bethlehem that night.

There is no place in our life. We need all we have for wife and children.

We have our career to make in the world, and our time and our strength are needed for that. We are going to make the world better some day. We hope, at all events, that we are going to win our place in that world, and we cannot step out of our room to let a need come in which shall drag us down into that court-yard among the cattle and the beasts of burden.

Our life is full of the stores of goods which we have collected, out of which we would make fortunes, and we need all our time and strength to care for them. The spirit of rivalry is in us, to surpass these others about us. Money we have, yes, and we will give it, that you may buy a place in some one's else life for this need, but for ourselves we cannot risk our precious bales of goods down there in the muck, among the camels and the donkeys, nor let some strangers that we know not take the room next to them, from which they might rob us.

We, you know, are people of delicate health and delicate nurture. We must care for our health. We have so many ailments, the burden of our flesh is so heavy for us to carry that we cannot risk exposure there. Yes, the case is hard, but do you think of us? Don't you know what our condition is? Do you talk to me about caring for others and don't you know what my health is and how I need to receive all your sympathy and all the care that I can get, instead of giving to others?

Or: Yes, but you know how I was brought up. It is an easy thing for some of these people to go down into that muck among those beasts. They were bred differently from me; but you cannot expect me to do it.

Ah! dear hearts, may God grant each of us on this Christmas-day a little of that magic lotion of selfless love that, if we know it not already, there may be revealed to you and to me the place where Christ, our King, is to be found. The helpless and the needy one (in what unexpected guise God comes), he is, for you and for me, the one through whose agency God would be born into our lives.

Jesus came to turn the world upside down, and there is some sense in the mediæval method of celebrating Christmas as the feast of misrule, when the child was made king and the fool was made bishop, and Church and State were for the nonce ruled by the lowest and the most foolish of all; and yet not that the world would be turned upside down by a true recognition of the meaning of Christmas, in the sense that lawlessness and misrule and folly would come in. Nay, it would be the rule of love, and the most perfect and wisest of all laws is love, for love is the law of God; and the fundamental nature of the law of love is that honour and help be given to those who most need it, because they are the poorest and the most helpless; that the strongest and the greatest should bow the knee and worship at the shrine of the weakest and the poorest, pouring out there their gifts of gold and frankincense and myrrh, because it is the poor and the weak and the foolish that have need of those things.

Wise men, would ye find the great King of the new

kingdom of God? There He lies. You need not go back two thousand years. He is here now. Bring to Him your gifts of gold and frankincense and myrrh. And this shall be the sign unto you,—a Child, because He is the weakest and the most foolish; wrapped in swaddling clothes and lying in a manger, because He is the poorest and the meanest, without a house to dwell in, like the beasts of the field. And yet ye shall find Him to be greater than all the kings of the earth; for if ye will acknowledge Him as your King, He shall bring out in you the best and highest that is in your nature, and ye shall become sons of God, serving but not needing to be served. Serve the weakest, and as ye serve Him ye shall yourselves become like gods, and this earth shall be changed into the kingdom of heaven; for the kingdom of heaven is the kingdom of love, where he who has gives to him who has not, and the strong serves the weak, and there is no having and not having, no strong and no weak, for each in love imparts what the other lacks.

SONS OF GOD

St. John i., 12: As many as received him to them gave he power to become the sons of God.

AGAIN we are come to Christmas-day, when all the world's ideas are turned upside down. To-day we celebrate the birth of our King: not in a palace, not in wealth and luxury, not surrounded by pomp and power. Our King was of very doubtful birth, born of poor parents, under conditions so distressful as to be positively indecent; His palace, the open court-yard, reeking with the filth of the animals that crowded it; the body-guard, that stood about His bed and certified His birth, the beasts of burden and the cattle, men's household slaves; the throne from which He ruled His kingdom, the manger from which those cattle fed. Yes, surely, Christmas turns the world's ideas upside down.

And the life that began in this wise so continued to its close, when He, whom we proclaim the Saviour of the world, died as a criminal on the cross. Born of parents so poor, so lacking in thrift or energy or forethought, so lacking in repute among their fellow men, so pressed upon by their environment and so little able to meet the conditions of that environment, that when the time of greatest need came the baby was born in the filthy court-yard of the inn, among the beasts of burden! So little successful in His short life in achieving place,

distinction, repute among those who were considered the leaders of His people, that He was put to death as a common criminal between two thieves and murderers on the cross. A strangely pitiful and unsuccessful career—and yet we say that this was the Son of God.

There was a great temple in Jerusalem, which was still in process of reconstruction at the time when Christ was born. It was the centre of the Jewish faith and nation. The traditions of the people looked back to the first temple erected on that site by Solomon and dwelt with delight on the details of its glory and its wealth. Solomon held a high place in their religious annals, as one who had well pleased God because he built that temple. As is the way with such things, much suffering was built into its walls. To complete this grand work, men were torn from their homes and compelled to work in gangs for so many months or so many years. Their labour was taken from their families, who were left to shift for themselves in the meantime, and many of them of course sickened and some died under the conditions of such forced labour. Solomon won the glory and renown of the great work. It was his wisdom that planned it, it was his wealth that provided the materials, it was his power that furnished the workmen. The oppression and exaction, the cruelty and the tyranny connected with this and his other great constructions, palaces and the like, disrupted the kingdom. He left his son an inheritance of discontent and revolt. All that men forgot in the glory of the structure which he had erected for the worship of God, and Solomon was counted a benefactor. The last temple, which Herod built, was still more beautiful than Solomon's

structure. The man who murdered his own beloved wife, who in jealous rage executed his own children; the man who is execrated in Jewish and Christian story alike for his massacres of men and women and little children, built, partly for the satisfaction of his own pride, partly to win the suffrages of the Jews, partly out of a desire to make his peace with God, a temple which was one of the wonders of the world, and the pride of the Jewish race and religion.

These are the things that men count great. The oppression, the cruelty, the misdeeds, the death of the innocent and the suffering of the down-trodden working-folk are forgotten, in the world's thought, in the benefits which the world derives from the deeds and the constructions of such men. Their temples and cathedrals, their hospitals and asylums, their schools and colleges, their endowments of research and education, make them great in men's minds.

According to an old Christian tradition, the veil of that temple which Herod built was rent in twain when Christ died on the cross. A new order had come in with Jesus Christ. The temple for the indwelling of God was man. Man as man was exalted to a new place. In him God was revealed. There was no room for the old order. No buildings, however beautiful, whose foundations rested on the sorrow and suffering of men, could contain the majesty of God or show forth God to men.

Christmas, the birth feast of Jesus, is the exaltation of humanity, quite apart from all accidents of birth or wealth, quite apart from all acquirements of culture and learning, quite apart even from all achievements and distinctions, of countries conquered, of kingdoms founded,

of laws framed, of the mysteries of nature unfolded and the forces of nature harnessed and bridled in man's service. Not that these things have not their place in the economy of God's plan, but that the final revelation of God does not consist in these things. Behind them and beyond them is a something else which constitutes the essence of divinity, by which power is given to as many as receive Him to become the sons of God. He was God's revelation of the power of love, a power which exceeds all else. By love and by love only the world can be remade, for by love the world was made, not, as man fancied, by a commandment of power, but by a breath of love. In the birth of Jesus was revealed that which had been from the beginning. He was in the world and the world was made by Him and the world knew Him not. Love was the power by which the world had been made. But men did not understand this. They were looking for something else as the power of God and the manifestation of God, as the divine essence and the divine being. Only a few here and there dimly perceived the truth. This light had been in the world always and it had lighted men from the beginning; but the great bulk of men seemed to love darkness rather than light.

The story of the birth of Christ is full of a mystical significance. God came appealing through the need of a woman and an unborn child to men and women of the same blood, bound to them by the ties of a sacred religion, which, while setting them apart from other men, laid upon them a special obligation to care each for the other. He came in the appeal of supreme need: a woman whose child was to be born looking for a place to

bring it forth;—and no one would make place. Each was so wrapped up in his own selfishness and his own needs, each was so bound to maintain his own rights and his own privileges, that none would abandon his room in the inn that God might be born there. He came unto His own and His own knew Him not.

The inn is the life of man in which the love of God must be born, and that love of God comes to the life of each man, appealing for room to be born. It asks man to give up the room which self habits in his life, that the mother of God may come in; for love can be born only where self maketh place. But self says: I cannot make place, for this is my room. I have come first to the inn. I have here the right. Hath this woman so great need? But why hath she been so shiftless and so thriftless? Why at this time should she be demanding place? Why was not provision made for her need in advance? Surely it would be but to encourage beggary and thriftlessness, if when one cometh like this and maketh claim of great need I should give up that which is mine, for which I have laboured and fought and toiled. Nay, surely that cannot help but rather hinder. Truly, she undergoeth hardship, but it is through her own fault that the hardship is come upon her. Self hath many things to say, many reasons why it cannot make place, and he who listeneth to the voice of self can never know God, because he maketh no room in his life for the Son of God. But he who thrusteth self out altogether, who counteth nothing in comparison with the need of another, to him is God revealed and to him power is given to become a son of God.

Christmas is the exaltation of our humanity in the

birth of God in Jesus. That is the eternal lesson of Christmas-day: the power that is within you and me to become sons of God through the birth of love divine in our hearts, and the impossibility of truly knowing God or serving God by anything except surrender of ourselves. Through love was the creation of the world. Love is the light that lighteneth men in the darkness of this world of sin and sorrow. Love incarnate in man is the highest revelation of God to man, the eternal Son of God, and that love showing itself in the poorest and most needy exalts him above kings and priests.

To some small degree Christianity has touched and changed the world since that first Christmas-day. Feebly we have begun to apprehend Christ; and on each Christmas-day there seems to come a new breath of love from heaven, enlightening us, making us see more as God sees: that to make others happy, to give, not to receive, is the true joy of life. A little glimpse of heaven we earthlings catch at the Christmas tide. Ah! dear hearts, why can you and I not keep the gate of heaven open this far at least through all the year? God bless you to-day with the Christmas love and may the Christmas spirit go with you through the year that lies beyond. And as you seek communion with God through Christ at yonder altar to-day, may you indeed so know and receive the true Christ that you may become the sons of God. May self go out, and God come in.

THE GLORY OF GOD

St. Luke ii., 10: Behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy.

THIS season of the year was a time of great merry-making among the Romans, the time of the saturnalia. It was also a festival time among the Druids; and the religion of not a few northern peoples consecrated the period of the winter solstice to feasting, and even to license. For now the days begin to lengthen, the sun starts on its journey northward again, a promise that darkness shall soon give way to light, that barrenness and death shall yield to fertility and life. Have you ever waited for sunrise, watched for its coming, when you were eager for the day, when darkness meant danger and fear? You and I, who sleep in our well-guarded houses under the conditions of modern life, largely lose touch with nature. To many, if not most of us, it is rather a source of regret that daylight comes. It means that we must leave our sleep, leave our rest, leave our peace and quiet and commence the toilsome round of life once more. We never, or almost never, see the sun rise. Night has no horror to us personally and individually; it is not a hideous thing. Our streets are lighted; in fact some of them are more beautiful by night than by day.

It is a different thing when you live close to nature.

To primitive man night is the time of danger and dread. Then the wild beasts roam; hidden and mysterious dangers are all about. He who lives in a land where there are no streets knows also no lights to lighten the darkness of the night and drive away its peril.

I have travelled through the desert at night by the side of jungles full of wild beasts. All around jackals cried, hyenas laughed, and the native guides and guards whispered of danger from the lions. Wolves also and lynxes and wild boars there were and, more dangerous than any of these four-footed beasts, an occasional troop of Arabs on a night foray. Once our guide lost his way. It was pitch dark; there were no landmarks to be seen. There was danger that the caravan might become scattered in the desert and men, goods, and beasts be lost, and, to add to the danger and confusion, the night air was bitterly cold, and mind and body were half numbed with the chill. Oh! how welcome was that faint glow of light in the east, which increased and increased until we could see one another and the country about us. Then the wild beasts began to slink into their hiding-places, dangers vanished. The faint glow changed into the blush of dawn; the pale pink gave way to a golden glory; and, as we topped a hill, suddenly the sun shot up in all its splendour.

He who has lived through such things will have the deepest sympathy with that worship which men in old times paid the sun. Is it to be wondered at that the sun to them was the emblem of God's glory and of God's power, dispelling darkness, driving away danger, guiding men's feet in the way of peace? And then how men depended upon the sun! When it moved southward all

nature died. The earth grew hard and sterile; there were no fruits; it was a time of want and discomfort. But when the sun came back again, warming with its rays the surface of the earth, all nature sprang once more into life. Plants and trees yielded their fruit; for man and beast there was abundance.

But what has this to do with Christmas-day? Why this: the early Christian fathers were wisely sympathetic with the spiritual yearnings and with the religion of their heathen ancestors. They took the old feast at the time of the winter solstice, when the days begin to lengthen and the sun is starting northward, and turned it into the feast of the birth of Christ. It is as though they said to those heathen religions: Ye do well to see the glory of God in that which brings you blessing: ye do well to see God manifested in His creatures; and surely there is nothing in heaven or earth, of the things which He has made, more wonderful, more glorious, and more helpful to man than the sun in the heavens;—and yet the glory of God as revealed in this, His creature, is not to be compared with the glory of God which He hath revealed in His Son, Jesus Christ. Whom ye ignorantly worshipped, Him we show unto you. The sun rising in the heavens dispels darkness and drives away danger, and the warmth of its rays brings life to the earth; but Jesus Christ reveals God in the hearts of men, driving darkness out of their lives, bringing love into the world. Is it wonderful that Jesus was called the Sun of righteousness, with healing on His wings? But more than this: Christmas-day tells the world that nothing in creation can compare with man himself; he is above and beyond creation, because he is the son of God. The glory

of God is revealed in man as it is not revealed in any of the outward creation. When the glory of the Lord shone round about the shepherds and the angels brought them good tidings of great joy to all people, those tidings were that in man God is born; that man is divine, and that in him is expressed the glory of God, as it is not expressed in the created things of God's universe, however wonderful they may be.

Now how was God shown to man? Not in a king's palace, not in some great ruler of the nations, not in some famous warrior, not in some successful man of business, not in the form of some wonderful poet or wise philosopher, but as a helpless baby, a child of poor parents, born under most doubtful conditions in a manger in the little town of Bethlehem. We can never know Jesus Christ, the Babe of Bethlehem, we can never comprehend the real meaning of Christmas until we understand the divinity of human life, until we realise the divinity which is in every baby that is born, in the house of the rich, or the house of the poor, in the house of the famous, or the house of the obscure, in the palace, the almshouse or the prison; until we realise the divinity that lies in our humanity, that it is not the place or the name or the race, but the little human baby itself which is divine. Because it is a child of man, therefore it is a child of God. We are set apart from all creation, from the things that have life and the things that have not life, by the divine that is within us. That is the good tidings of great joy which the angels brought to all mankind when Jesus Christ, the child of Mary, was born in the manger in Bethlehem. Shepherds, peasants from the field, came and bowed down and worshipped the

child; wise and rich men, from the distant east, came and bowed down and worshipped the child. Beautiful stories these, and full of meaning. Wherever humanity remains true to the best that is in it, it will love and reverence and worship the helpless babe. When the baby no longer appeals to it, something is wrong with humanity; something is wrong with the heart of the man or the woman to whom the helpless child does not appeal. And here is another side of that divinity which is in humanity. The baby appeals to us because it is helpless, because it can do nothing for itself; it can give nothing to you, it asks everything from you. It does not know your position; it is nothing to it that you are rich or that you are poor, that you are famous or that you are unknown, that you are beautiful or that you are ugly. It knows you as one who can serve it and as nothing else, it appeals to you for your service, and by doing that it appeals to the best that is in you.

The story of Christ's birth, beautiful in legend and in art, is in fact a pitiful story, some would say: a child of parents so shiftless or so poor that when He was born He had no roof over His head. Of Jewish origin, He was the victim of foreign rule. It was the behest of the conqueror which compelled His parents to leave their home at such a time and travel several days' journey to a distant town. By tradition of ancient royal family, that family had gradually sunk to a very low estate. What prospect and what outlook in the world for Him? And yet He was the very God incarnate? In Him was revealed the glory of God and His birth was good tidings of great joy to all mankind.

God is born into the world out of the need and misery

and want of men. The need of man is the mother, but God Almighty is the father. We commemorate on Christmas-day the mystery of the wonderful, infinite love of God, which makes marriage with the want of men, so that out of man's direst need, through the love of God, a divine child is born, made flesh to be the Saviour of man, his Redeemer from want and sin. And what is true of the world is true of each man in the world. The birth of Christ in the heart of man is a birth whose mother is suffering and misery, often times the suffering and misery and even the sin of that man himself, but the Father is God.

Another thought connects itself with the story of that birth. When to that inn in Bethlehem came Joseph and Mary; for the woman in her hour of need no place could be found. All the rooms were full. None would make place. Had any known that it was God seeking for a place, do you not think they would have yielded their own place to Him? But they could not see God coming in the need of that poor man, and that poor woman with her child unborn. And so each of those people in the inn that night lost the great opportunity. The world is like that inn, in that God comes to our doors begging for a place to be born. As He came then to the people in the inn, so He comes now to us, in the form of human need. He comes in squalor, asking us to make room, and we do not see that it is God. The Son of God can find place for His birth in the heart of any man and become the Saviour of that man only through inconvenience and loss and sacrifice on the part of that man: only thus is God revealed to man.

We come, as it were, to the cradle of Jesus to-day, we

stand in loving reverence and tenderness there and pray for communion with God through the Baby of Bethlehem. It is a tale which has touched the hearts of men the world over, and those who are careless at other times are standing now about the cradle, reverently, feeling the presence of divinity. There is something in their hearts which causes them to be kindly, merciful, loving forgiving, charitable, as they were not erstwhile, thoughtful of the joy and comfort of others, ready to give to make others, and, above all, little children, glad at this time, as they are not ready to give at other times. But it is one thing merely to go out of our rooms into the comfortless court and look at the babe in the manger and give gifts to shelter and clothe and feed it there. It is another thing to surrender our room to that babe, to take it, unborn, as our guest, to make place for the mother to bear it; to cherish that child in our own heart and life, to make place for it there, to put self out that it may come in; and yet that must be done if we would enter into the fulness of the great joy the angels proclaimed.

To each of us comes the mother of God that is to be, in her need, seeking a place where her child may be born. May God open our eyes and our minds and our hearts, if by chance we have been tempted to refuse her shelter, failing to see in her the mother of our Lord.

THE ECHO OF THE CROSS

St. Luke ii., 32: A light to lighten the Gentiles.

IN the Bavarian Tyrol there is a beautiful lake called Königssee. The waters are blue like the heavens of God, while all around rise mighty mountains piled peak on peak, like towers of Babel climbing into the very dwelling place of the Almighty. On a perfect summer day a little party was rowed across that lake, a paradise of quiet beauty in the midst of a universe of mountain grandeur. Reaching a certain spot our guide halted the boat, calling on us to keep still, and fired an ancient blunderbuss of a weapon in the air. When the noise of the explosion had died away, for an instant there was silence. Then from a far-off mountain-side a cannon boomed forth. This was answered by another and another and another, always rising higher, until there seemed to be a battle in the heavens, rolling nearer and nearer. At last above our heads there burst a deafening peal of thunder. And all this was only the echo of that first puny pistol shot.

Like this the birth of Christ has echoed through the world. A tiny, helpless babe, born under pitiful conditions, in a manger at Bethlehem. The little babe grew through childhood to manhood, and up to his thirtieth year, as boy and man, he lived the life of an humble artisan in the insignificant town of Nazareth. Then He

gave up His trade and for a couple of brief years wandered through the countryside doing works of mercy, speaking words of love and truth. The rulers of the people seized him and condemned Him to die the death of a criminal. Three crosses set on Calvary! Between two thieves upon the middle cross, Jesus crucified speaks the words: "It is finished."

The pistol shot had been fired in Palestine, and a little company of men and women had heard its sound. Then all was silence. But now, hark! The mountains of the Gentiles echo the sound; louder and louder it resounds. Land answers land. The echo swells to a deafening roar, fast filling the world; from north to south, from east to west, louder and louder, wider and still wider, the ever gathering sound echoes and re-echoes. And the end is not yet, for at the last, from clouds and great glory shall burst that final thunder peal of His name, girdling the earth with its sound, swelling wide from pole to pole.

How sweet is that old story of the angels singing to shepherds their hymn of "Glory to God in the Highest," because peace and good-will had been born among men. In mystic strain it tells the truth that God is nearest to those whose lives are unworldly, because of their very lowliness and humility. That is the Christmas tale. Then, in similar mystic strain, we are told how He who was born was born not for the Jews alone and not only for the humble and lowly, but that He might be a light to lighten all the nations of the earth, and that He might teach men of power and wealth by self-conquest and abnegation to enter into the kingdom of God. Wise men came from distant lands to bow before the new-born

King and honour Him with gifts and oblations. It is a beautiful picture of what His life should mean to the world, all nations hailing Him as King, consecrating their power and their treasures to His service, to find in Him their Saviour and Redeemer. The song of the angels to the shepherds of Judæa found its chorus when the gentile world took up the refrain, echoing forth the glad tidings of peace, good-will to men; and that choir of the nations shall grow and grow until all the world shall have joined its ranks and the song of the angels become a myriad voice of thunder, pealing through every ear to the heart and life of each son of man.

But one may well say: the picture which you paint is an attractive one and we would fain believe it true, but how can we reconcile its presentation with the actual facts of our experience? It is true that the religion of Christ is professed to-day by many millions of men and that, so far as what is called civilisation and so far as material strength are concerned, Christianity dominates the world; but there is very little peace and good-will in that Christianity. All Europe is professedly Christian, with the exception of Turkey. Officially every European nation recognises Christ and professes allegiance to His faith and teaching; but how much peace and good will is there in Europe? Christian governments are plotting and scheming, each against the other, lying and cheating, robbing or over-reaching one another. In Russia, in the name of Christ, guided and directed by priests and bishops of the Christian Church, Christians have robbed and murdered and outraged thousands of poor unoffending fellow men and women, because they did not profess the name of Christ or because, professing

it, they did not accept all the doctrines which the ruling and priestly classes associated with that name. The Czar of Russia rules in the name of Christ as head both of Church and State, and this professed head of the Church of Christ in Russia, or men acting in his name, so shamelessly robbed and horribly oppressed his fellow men and women that, in sheer desperation, the poor victims rose in blind fury to commit against their oppressors crimes almost as atrocious as those under which they had so long suffered.

In our own land, which God has so wonderfully blessed, the land which we proclaim to be the land of freedom, where there may be no tyranny and oppression of one by another, where each shall have the right, according to the convictions of his conscience, to work out his life for himself, free from the trammels of autocrat or hierarch, where the very fact that we have not introduced religion formally into our Constitution has made us, as we fondly claim, the most Christian of all nations, how are peace and good-will manifested in our dealings with one another? Is not our life the same old hideous struggle, as of so many wild beasts, for wealth and place and pleasure, each striving to get what he can for himself or to hold what he has gotten with small regard for the rights of others, except as he is compelled by superior force to recognise those rights?

For evidence of the evil in our political life you have but to pick up the daily papers to see that in nation, state, and city corruption and dishonest partisanship run riot. Places in the Senate, the highest council of the nation, are bought for money, and senators use their power shamelessly to promote dishonest and nefarious

schemes for the enrichment of their friends, their partisans, and themselves, at the expense of the public. Men are appointed to office in the State, not to render service to the people and protect the interests of those who cannot protect themselves, but that they may connive at or assist corrupt and dishonest men in plundering the public by means of insurance companies, trust companies, banks, and the like. The leaders of the business world, the presidents and directors of the great railroads, and the trusts of various kinds are accused of corrupting public officials and leaders and of violating the laws of the land for their own profit or to satisfy the greed of those whom they represent. Lawyers sell themselves to the highest bidder, prostituting their high calling and their talents to the service of the men who seek means to rob the people and break the law without incurring its penalties. Society is so corrupt that it condones these frauds and honours and bows down to the men who have made their millions, not only not according to the laws of Christ's kingdom, by peace and goodwill toward men, but even in flagrant violation of those principles of right and justice which were recognised as binding even by the old heathen world. And as for our press, we find hundreds of venal papers which, for considerations of money, for advertisements, or for political reasons, protect and sustain dishonesty, suppressing facts, publishing false news, gulling and beguiling the people. Who does not see about him in this Christian land and Christian community, in his own immediate circle of Christian friends, the ravages of social and personal vice—drunkenness, immorality, malice, dishonesty? How few men and women there are in this

great city of ours, with its numerous Christian churches, who bear the burden of the work for God and His Christ. Take the lists of your societies for benevolent, philanthropic, civic, social work, for betterment of any sort; read over these lists of officers, directors, and active members. See how the same names occur again and again and how ridiculously few, in comparison to the size of the Christian community, are those who are awake in these regards to their Christian responsibilities. What is the relation of employer and employed among us? Is it love and peace and good-will which cause labour troubles, strikes, lockouts, which array employers and employees against one another in a hostility almost as clearly pronounced as that of the armed nations of Europe one toward the other? This is the picture which is unfolded before the eyes of any thinking man who reads the literature of to-day—books, magazines, papers —who moves among men and is forced to confront the problems of every-day life. It is because of these conditions that you will often hear these men saying: What has your Christianity done, how has it bettered the conditions of the heathen world? The life of Christ was beautiful, but where is the life of Christ lived to-day among those who profess His name, and what influence have His life and death produced in reality upon the world?

Look back one moment and consider the conditions which prevailed before Christ came. I do not ask you to consider the savage condition of man, living like a brute; rather examine the condition of man in the most civilised nations and ages of the old world. Go to Egypt and Babylonia. Vast and splendid ruins attest the an-

cient wealth and luxury of those lands. We enter their buried palaces and tombs and behold depicted on the walls scenes from the triumphs of kings, or see portrayed there the construction of mighty monuments. Hundreds of thousands of slaves, captives from other lands, or levies from the "beasts of the people" toil without pay and without reward beneath the lash of the taskmaster. We catch a glimpse of the condition of the great bulk of mankind in those days, oppressed, trampled under foot, their lives lives of cruel toil at the behest and beneath the rod of the rich and powerful. There was no care nor respect for the individual man if he were poor or belonged to a foreign people. The lot of the great masses of mankind was hopeless, forced labour. Human beings of the lower ranks of society were placed in the same category in which we of to-day reckon horses and oxen. Those splendid palaces, those pyramids and temples and hanging gardens, were founded on the corpses of men and women and little children, and the sorrows of nations cemented their walls. We unearth the records of the ancient rulers of these lands and read a story of cruelties which might well make our blood run cold: men flayed alive, hundreds of human beings impaled on stakes around a captured city, kings delighting to blind, with their own hands, their captured rivals; prisoners caged with beasts and hung up at the city gates; whole cities and regions of country devastated by a universal massacre, accompanied with indescribable outrage and torture. This is but a tithe of the horrors in which the conquerors delighted and of which they boasted. Justice and mercy seem alike unknown; and not only do they seem unknown to men,

but even the gods whom they worship approve and sanction such practices, and these same gods require of their worshippers a service involving immorality and drunkenness.

Cross the Mediterranean to Greece, with its fairy grace of art and literature, which have never been surpassed. Out of the gems of poetry preaching the doctrine of pleasure, sighs forth ever and anon a very hopelessness of misery. They try to be glad and groan in despair; and even as you watch you see tyranny, anarchy, confusion, and strife gain the upper hand; dishonesty, immorality, love of ease, and sensual indulgence bring about the downfall of Greece, and the religion of Greece perishes.

Rome, with its strength, masters the world. It drains provinces in legalised robbery to enrich the Roman citizens. Its highest philosophy teaches selfishness. The order of the Roman state is an advance upon the systems that have gone before, but it has not brought happiness, nor has it achieved stability. If the world was better under the Romans than under their predecessors, at least from our standpoint (in spite of all the evil about us), its condition was a miserable one. The weak were crowded to the wall like dogs, and even the rich and prosperous knew that if misfortune befell them their fellows would turn against them as wolves rend a wounded member of their pack. When I read the records of the ancient world, I wonder to myself at times how men and, much more, how women could have borne to live in days such as those.

Our very judgment of life to-day is different from theirs, and it is largely this difference of standpoint

which makes the conditions of the present time seem to us so abhorrent. Men in this country and in Europe, however lax they may be in the practice of their Christianity, are, nevertheless, in their judgment of right and wrong, in their estimate of the conditions of life, affected, often unwittingly to themselves, by the standard which Christ brought into the world. For a new spirit did enter into the world with Christ. A light began to lighten the darkness of the nations. Not for one moment would I have you understand me to mean that God had left the early world without light and hope. Moses, Elijah, Isaiah, Jeremiah, and many another prophet of Israel had seen angel visions and heard the song of glory to God and peace, good-will among men. Zoroaster and Gautama, Plato, Lucretius, and many another wise man of the Gentiles had seen the brightness of a star pointing toward the manger at Bethlehem and done homage to the divine incarnate in man. But shepherds of Israel and wise men of the Gentiles had but seen the day-star which precedes the rising of the sun. Man, in the early days of the world's history, you may liken to a new-born animal, blind-eyed and groping in darkness. Christ opened men's eyes, and made them see the evil of the things they were doing. It is the increasing power of vision in man, as he becomes more and more accustomed to the light which came by Christ, which makes him recoil in horror from those things which once gave him no shock. The coming of Christ has been like the slow rising of the sun—first a faint light which but makes the darkness visible; then you begin to see one object and another looming up, strange and mysterious, out of the nothingness which was about you before. Then the

heavens begin to brighten with the glory of the coming sun.

If you read the story of the Christian ages you will see how slowly and how gradually the light has lightened that darkness, and how in very fact it is the light of Christ which has effected these changes. It is the Christian element which has been the essential feature in the development of the higher and better part of that civilisation which makes Europe and America what they are for good. Christianity is not a scheme of religion, but a principle of life, which, implanted in a man or in mankind, grows and grows and develops in him. The progress of the Christian ages has been slow, oftentimes uncertain, like the growth and development of a child; and as a child, as it grows, looks back and wonders at its former ignorance and naughtiness, so the Christian world has done at each successive age. As you look back over the history of Christianity, it is like the history of your own life, full of what seem to you now absurd mistakes and errors and delusions. So, also, delusions and errors and wickednesses have paraded as Christianity. Much that we of to-day abhor in Russian conditions was regarded by our own forefathers as not only consistent with but required by the principles of Christianity. Often men in advance of their age, men who perceive more clearly than those about them the real teaching of Christ, have become utterly disheartened by the lack of fulfilment of Christian promise in the religious practice of Christ's followers, and have consequently thought Christianity moribund and Christian civilisation doomed to follow the systems that have gone before. But, breaking free from some foreign, un-Christ-

ian element, which had dragged it to the ground, Christianity has each time risen again, full of new life, until at the present day, in spite of all the evil that we see around us, Christianity is fresher and stronger than ever before. It has spread, sometimes more slowly, sometimes more rapidly, but always gaining ground.

Perhaps you can see best from the comparison of our own age with those which immediately precede it, both the vitality of Christianity, as the bettering power in the world, and also the nature of the betterment it is working; for our age has seen in the whole Christian world, but particularly in this country and England, a remarkable advance in the comprehension and practice of Christianity. The time was when men would trifle with life and murder one another for what they called their honour, and society commended them. Our age has branded such acts as murder. Not long since men were put to death for theft. Our better understanding of the love of Christ has brought about a far higher valuation of life. Men formerly set civil or criminal penalties on religious beliefs which disagreed with their own. Our age has done very much toward freeing the consciences and intellects of men, and so promoting the knowledge and the love of God. In the early years of the last century lotteries were a recognised agency in raising money for all public and benevolent objects, and gambling was thus sanctioned by both State and Church. Gambling in any form is now absolutely condemned by both State and Church. Drunkenness and loose living are common enough to-day, but society has adopted a tone of condemnation toward them which was unknown at the commencement of the last century. A century ago public

men lived without protest lives which to-day would render any public or even high business trust impossible. Above all, we have thrown off the fearful curse of human slavery and in so doing made an enormous stride toward the recognition of the Christian truth of the liberty, equality, and fraternity of man. You and I think that the present conditions in Russia are a horrible travesty on Christianity. I have already pointed out that they are the conditions which a few generations ago prevailed all over Europe. Russia is backward, but even the Russian autocracy and the Russian Church have shown a responsiveness to appeals based on grounds of Christian love which would have been impossible and unthought of one hundred or even fifty years since.

And if there seems to you to be an appalling condition of demoralisation and dishonesty in our own political and social life at the present time, with conditions such as I depicted a few moments since, do not nevertheless be hopeless of reform or think that the world is going backward. Meet those conditions and face them honestly. Ask yourself what part and what responsibility you have in them. Gird yourself at the beginning of this new year for a new battle, first for the conquest of yourself, and secondly for the victory of the cause of Christ over dishonesty and falsehood and sham. As the strongest men in life's work are those who have been forced to battle against the hardest conditions, so the best and the strongest Christian civilisation is that which is achieved as the result of a struggle against what sometimes seem odds. Do you realise the prevailing tone of materialism and dishonesty about you? Have you been discouraged by it? Do not be discour-

aged or disheartened. Thank God that He has called you to a noble work. For, to see the evil, means that you are one whose eyes God has opened, one whom God has called to be His comrade in the fight. And therefore, also, any one who sees evil and does not forthwith gird himself to the struggle to overcome that evil is a traitor to the cause of God and Christ. Take that thought with you as you stand scarce within the threshold of this new year, and the year will become to you a year of progress such as you never knew before.

When I was a boy I used to swim in the river yonder. Generally the current was strong. If I swam hard I could make headway, albeit slowly; if I relaxed my efforts for a moment, I lost ground, which took me a long time to regain. It was easy to go with the tide. I did not need to swim. I only floated along. There was no effort and yet I moved more swiftly than when I swam against it. So there was a constant temptation to go with the tide, but then, oh! the exhausting struggle that must be made to get back to the landing place. In our life we find ourselves set in a current of materialism, selfishness, indifference, supineness, neglect of responsibilities, unreadiness to accept obligations of service. It is hard to swim against that tide. And when you have swam as hard as you can, the gain you make seems to you scarcely perceptible, or you even seem to yourself sometimes to be going backwards. Why not yield, cease struggling and toiling, throw myself on my back, and go with the tide? Then a man is like the offal and dead waste that float will-less back and forth on the surface of the stream, vile and worthless. Because we live and because we would live we must

struggle and toil, and the swifter the current the stronger must be our efforts. If you see much evil, do not for that cause faint. Rather let it be the signal to you to strive as you never strove before.

And now one last word. Christianity has often seemed to be so tied up with ceremonies and forms and doctrines that it is no longer the religion of Jesus Christ. But there is one central thing in Christianity which, in spite of all false teachings, of indifferent and deadening ceremonies and doctrines, has remained a testimony to the life and teaching of Jesus himself, and that is the Sacrament of which you are to partake this morning. Whatever the Church has done, it has always kept that before men, as though by the inner guidance of the Holy Spirit, holding it out to men as the very central mystery of the faith. Whatever has been added, whatever has been taken away, still that Sacrament has held up before men the conception of service and sacrifice as the eternal element in Christianity and as the revelation of God to men. However you may interpret the words of Christ, whatever may be your conception of that Sacrament, transubstantiation, or consubstantiation, or merely commemoration, so long as men are brought to this as the final exhibition of that which is divine, so long as the Church protests by this Sacrament that the service of others and the sacrifice of self for the sake of love and truth are better than anything which can befall a man, are in fact divinity itself, so long the Church has within it the Spirit of God.

THE EMPTY TOMB

1 CORINTHIANS XV., 22: As in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive.

WHEN Jesus was laid in the rock-hewn tomb of Joseph of Arimathæa on the night of the Crucifixion, there was no time to perform the last rites of affection for the body of the dead. The following day was one on which by law and custom one might not visit the tomb, even to care for one's nearest and dearest. Imagine the heartaches of the mother of Jesus and the men and women who so tenderly loved Him at the thought of the poor body laid in the tomb uncared for, and their anxiety at least to perform those rites that should testify to their love! Imagine, too, their longing to see and touch Him once more!

Very early on Easter morning, before it was light, the women were on their way to the tomb. Then followed a startling discovery—the stone rolled away, the tomb emptied! Had those who so cruelly put Him to death added this further cruelty,—had they taken away the body, either to submit it to further indignities, or to prevent the affectionate care of those who so dearly loved Him? Then those women who had come to perform the tender rites hurried back to tell the men folk, the disciples, what had happened. And Peter and John came in all haste, running to see for themselves; but

they also found the tomb empty. The body of their Lord was no longer there.

We, too, find empty tombs where the bodies of our dear ones have lain. We, too, long to care for them, to minister tenderly to their needs, to touch them, to see them. Our love for them and our thought of them are wrapt up with their bodily form and appearance. When that is taken from us, then they seem to have gone indeed. So long as the body remains, with its familiar appearance, tangible, although it is cold and there is no response to our words or our caress, yet we can imagine our dear one to be present with us; but when the body is gone, then comes the dismay of loss, the full sense of our desolation. We all have known these empty tombs, for the bodies of our dead must vanish. And therefore the story of Mary and the women, of Peter and John, startled and dismayed by the empty tomb, by the disappearance of Him whom they loved, touches our hearts with some sense of personal experience and reality.

And what comes out of these tombs of our dead? Death is a strange revealer. Here is a man supposed to be a decent and orderly member of society, respected by those who knew him and dealt with him, beloved in his family, stricken down suddenly by the hand of death; and death reveals a double life, a wife betrayed, illicit associations which those who honoured and respected him had not for a moment imagined. Here is another, the prominence of whose position calls forth obituaries in the papers, a man who inherited great wealth, to use it in foolish and sensual extravagance, his one ambition to shine in a luxurious and smart society,

married to a divorcee who spurned the primal laws of matrimony. From his empty tomb issue but the ghosts of self-indulgence and luxury. Here is another with a record in the public life of the community, and when he has passed away, the best word that honest men can say of him is that, though he prostituted his position of trust to enrich himself at the expense of the community, he was no worse than many others. Out of his tomb come only vulture and harpy forms, like those old vampire dreams of the dead which prey in horrid shapes upon the living. This is all such men leave behind, horrid shapes to disturb, distress, and prey upon the vitals of their families and of their friends.

We often liken the grave to a chrysalis in which the caterpillar is entombed, to come out a beautiful butterfly. But not every chrysalis produces a butterfly. Sometimes ichneumon flies have stung them and laid within them eggs which hatch out worms that devour the poor caterpillar and then come forth in his stead to life; and so it may be that the chrysalis which you have watched and from which you expected a beautiful moth or butterfly to appear sends forth at last only a swarm of ichneumon flies. The graves of some men are like this. The tomb is empty; the body that you knew is gone, and out of the place where it lay comes a foul swarm of creatures whose existence you never suspected and which yet contain all that is left of him whose body lay there. Pray God our empty tombs be not like that!

But here is something quite different. Here, as we peer sorrowing into the empty tomb, sitting where once the body lay we see forms of heavenly grace. Death

reveals to those who mourn his loss the beauty of the character and the loveliness of the life of him who has gone. This one comes, with a tear in his eye, to clasp your hand in sympathy and say: "I loved him too," and tells you why—words he spoke, deeds he did of which you never heard before. Perhaps he was not famous. No one writes his obituary in the paper, but the record of his good deeds is written in the tender memories of those who knew him, and, though your tomb is empty, out of it comes a beautiful vision. The small faults and failings of your dead pass away, and you see the true beauty of the soul in the heavenly radiance that fills the place where he had lain.

But one asks: Is this the only immortality of our dead? My loved one that has gone, can I never touch him? Can I never sit and talk with him again? Does he exist only in the spirit of his deeds—these beautiful shades and memories, of which you tell me, that come out of the empty grave? Read further the story of Easter-day, how Mary Magdalene yearned to see and touch the Lord Himself, as we yearn to see and touch the dear ones that have gone. For her even the words of the angels had no comfort. It was not enough to see these messengers from heaven, sitting where He had lain, offering her their consolation, revealing to her the glory of the life of Him who had departed and His nearness to God himself. She wanted Him she had so dearly loved. Where had they laid Him? You remember how, with eyes blinded with her tears, she sought Him, and as she sought, there stood beside her one whom she unseeing imagined to be the gardener. And when the familiar voice asked the cause of her grief, in

the absorption of the one thought, "where have they laid Him?" deaf to all things else, she did not know His voice and addressed to Him her dazed and frantic supplication to tell her where they had laid her Lord. Then with compelling tenderness He called her name, "Mary," and she knew Him and would have clasped His feet to worship Him.

This and all the tales of the appearance of our Lord contain something mysterious, perplexing to us of to-day as to the men and women of that day. He appeared to Mary, yet she could not touch Him. He walked with the disciples that went to Emmaus and talked with them and they did not know Him until, as they sat at their evening meal, He blessed the bread. He came to the Apostles in the upper room. With bated breath they told how the door was closed and yet He stood among them; and when their hearers said that it was but a spirit, a vision, they told how He had eaten with them, and how Thomas had touched His side and His hands. There were other strange tales, too; how He appeared to groups of them in Galilee, on the Mount of Olives, to above five hundred at one time; and even Paul testified that he also had seen Him.

What does it all mean? It means, I think, that we touch here on that region which is beyond certainly our present knowledge, probably any knowledge which we are capable of attaining in our mundane existence. Our perceptions and our understanding are limited by our bodies of flesh, by our material surroundings, by conditions of time and space. We see and we know only under these material limitations. And even this matter that limits us is at its extremities beyond our

ken. We cannot tell how nor whence matter came, nor when nor how nor into what matter shall pass. We perceive a something or some things within matter or affecting matter which yet are not matter,—force, life, and spirit, or whatever name or names you use; but we cannot explain their relation to matter, nor separate them from matter and see them for themselves. We speculate and imagine, but even our imagination is blocked by the impossibility of imagining that which does not have material existence and bodily form. We do not understand our own experiences, much less can we communicate them clearly and intelligibly to others.

The story of the resurrection of Jesus Christ is the story of the victory over material death. Somehow, in some way, in some body which you may call with St. Paul, if you will, a spiritual body, Jesus re-appeared to His followers, leaving on their minds an impression of strangeness and of glory, of a being beyond their understanding and their comprehension. And in this victory over death He prophesied to us our victory over death in and with Him. And as we read how He communed then with those He loved and realise the communion which He has had with His followers in all the ages since, we dimly perceive the possibility not only of a future life but also of communion and reunion with those whom we have loved.

So wonderful was this resurrection of Jesus unto life that to St. Paul it seemed to mean a new life, a new creation. Turning to his Old Testament he found the story of man's beginning on earth: Adam, that is, mankind, placed in God's garden; sinning, falling, struggling with the nature about him, earning his bread by the

sweat of his brow, learning the lesson of life by sad and hard experience; striving and toiling, sinning and dying, whole nations, whole civilisations sinning unto death, passing away and leaving nothing behind. Here was the new man who had changed all this, bringing peace and love where there had been war and hatred, life in place of death, man recreated in the image of God.

There has always been a tendency, when men are sick of the temptation and the sin that beset them, to regard the material things of this world, including our own bodies, as evil. Many men and many sects have sought salvation in the destruction or negation of the humanity that is in them. And to not a few professing Christians, to-day as through all the ages since Christ came, this flesh, with its passions and its lusts, its appetites and its desires, has seemed essentially evil. It is the old Adam. Life can be found only in complete separation from these things.

You and I see death all about us in men and women who live only in the body. We have seen human beings sodden and degraded, living like the animals. We have seen men and women toiling in the tread-mill of life, with no higher thought, apparently, than to do just what must be done in order to obtain the food to sustain life, to satisfy their passions and desires, to care for their offspring, much as an animal cares for its offspring. Soulless, we have called such persons, because, although evidently higher in intellect and capacity than the beasts, we have yet found no other element in them than this animal one. Wicked we could not say they are, but simply they appear soulless. And we have known others, soulless from another cause, steeped

in sensuality, living for the satisfaction of their own greed, heartlessly trampling down those weaker than themselves, men and women in whom there seems no response to spiritual appeal. Death, the apostle calls this. They are dead in Adam.

And we have seen death in another form, sickness caused or aggravated by pure selfishness and egotism, men and women whose thoughts are turned in upon themselves, who brood upon themselves, their needs, their ailments, their wants, their desires, who see nothing and know nothing except themselves. Death all this is also, death in Adam, as St. Paul calls it.

Life comes with Christ. When man conceives of his life as the life of God, when he freely and daringly squanders his life for the world, pouring out the treasures of his being, the life-blood of his heart for the world, then he is made alive through Christ. Sin and sorrow, sickness and suffering, which are death, give place to life in a regenerate humanity.

And what has Christ brought out of the grave to you and to me? I cannot prove, by any test of physical science, the continuance of life, a future existence. When I seek to prove it in that way the future seems to me as blank as it did to those men and women of old, who were filled with dismay because the body of the Lord was gone. I cannot tell you how He rose, with what body, in what form, what became of the body that had been; but as I read that story in the Gospels, and as I read the story of the experience of Christian believers through the ages that have succeeded, I know that Christ has risen from the dead, and I believe that in His victory over death He has revealed to us the

reality of life immortal. And so I trust my dear ones to the grave in confident hope that this is not the end; and so I expect, when my time comes and my work here is finished, to pass into a new life in which the old loves shall not be lost but glorified.

THE RESURRECTION OF GOD

COLOSSIANS iii., 1: If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God.

IT has been a long, hard winter and everywhere men and women are glad to see the signs of spring. Even in our city life, with its lack of touch with Dame Nature and Mother Earth, we feel the weariness and dreariness of dead winter and rejoice in the sunshine and the warm air that betoken the resurrection of nature. True, there is but little of nature here,—the earth concealed by pavements; our travel done on rails stretched through or beneath the streets; the houses rising like walls of cañons on either side, shutting out the sunshine; the air charged with dust, smoke, and soot, and converted out of its original element into a sort of manufactured city product; trees only in the parks, which we busy folk have scant time to visit, although we talk with pride of their existence. Yes, even we exult in the new birth of nature that is just beginning to take place, and, shut out as we are from contact with nature, many and many a house makes a feeble attempt to enjoy the gladness of the coming year in the budding of spring flowers that are placed in windows here and there. But if we city-dwellers are glad that spring has come, much greater is the glad-

ness of those who live in touch with nature, much deeper the significance of its coming for those who live close to Mother Earth and realise the dependence of man's outward life on the conditions of the seasons. The bosom of the earth is bare again; the sap begins to flow, the leaf buds of the trees swell, so full of meaning to the dwellers in the country, so full of prophecy of the new life of brightness and verdure and fertility that shall take the place of the dark and gloomy death of the long winter.

Do you wonder that this resurrection of nature meant the coming of God to men of olden time? That they saw in it a resurrection of divine life? The very name of our festival, Easter, is itself evidence of the great and glorious significance to the old heathen Germans of this birth of nature's life. God, who had forsaken them, God who seemed dead, had come back, had come to life, would pour out His loving kindness upon them once more. It is a heathen name with which we designate our glorious resurrection festival, a name which connects us with the thoughts and hopes and aspirations of our heathen forebears. Would you have it otherwise? True, you do not worship the goddess Eastra or Eostra at this festival. Perhaps you even forget that it is her name that we have given to the feast day of the risen Lord. It was a part of the method of the early Church to connect the events of Christ's life and the doctrines of His religion with heathen rites and heathen thought, on that principle which St. Paul propounded in the famous sermon at Athens, when he said to the Athenians: "Whom therefore ye ignorantly worship, Him declare I unto you."

The old world found hope and some promise of resurrection from the dead for man in the resurrection of dead nature year by year. In Egypt and Persia, in Syria, among our Germanic ancestors, there were varying thoughts of the resurrection, all of them drawn from the analogy of nature. Men realised that all life came from God. The remote ancestors of the Jews laid down a rule that none should consume blood, because blood was life, and as life was peculiarly sacred to God from whom it came, to Him it should return. The same thought in another form shows itself over and over again, in many places and at many times. Life came from God; and so the stirring of life in spring, after the death of winter, was a movement of God Himself, a return of Him from whom comes all life. The resurrection of nature was the resurrection of God from the dead; and further, by analogy, men drew a deduction of their own resurrection from the resurrection of all nature. To bind, therefore, that old German feast of Eastra, of the resurrection of nature in spring, with the resurrection of Christ from the dead, was to claim that Christianity was the completion and fulfilment of that hope which the heathen ancestors had drawn from the processes of nature about them. To you and to me to-day these processes of nature are no more than beautiful symbols. For us their significance depends upon our belief in the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead. They are not the means by which we argue to the resurrection, but, believing that Christ is risen, we find in the resurrection of the world of nature about us beautiful symbols to set forth that divine truth which has changed the life of man in the

world. So on Easter-day we decorate our churches with flowers. Lilies especially are regarded as significant of the Resurrection, because of the unsightly tubers from which they spring, which have lain dead, like the dead bodies of men, put aside in a tomb, as it were, with no hint in their form and appearance of the new life and the glorious beauty that shall spring from them.

But these flowers which we use as the symbols of the resurrection from the dead have another suggestion for our Easter. Beautiful and pure, their beauty and their purity come out of unsightliness and uncleanness. Decay and pollution are the conditions of the new growth and new life of nature. And so they are to us an emblem of the glorious life which shall be born out of the unsightliness, the squalor, the very uncleanness of our human conditions, an emblem of the need of death and disease, with all their horrors, as conditions of the new life that is to be. Yes, out of the very sin of man, through the grace of God Almighty, is born a newer and a higher life. Strange paradox of nature that things so beautiful and pure and white as these lilies should come out of death and corruption and uncleanness! Is it any more strange that in the spiritual world there should be the same development?

But when we talk of the resurrection of the dead, of immortality, of the life eternal, we must never forget that the life eternal is a life which must begin here. The seed that is planted in the earth must contain a life germ, otherwise it cannot grow. Every tree that begins now to prepare to put forth new leaves and rich fruit must have stored up the germs of leaves and fruit

before hand. The cocoon out of which comes the beautiful butterfly must first have been provided with its living tenant. Life comes only out of life. There is a regular process of development and growth in the physical world, and the laws of the moral universe in that are the same as the laws of the physical universe. The resurrection from the dead, to which you and I look forward as the gateway to the life eternal, is possible only as a development of conditions, a continuance of a life begun, prepared for here and now. True, in the tiny, unformed, germinal conditions we do not always recognise the glorious future. True, that life in the germ often seems to us unsightly, yes, even worthless, and a failure.

We are conscious of our sins. We have struggled and struggled against them and we are not their master. We have dreamt great dreams of the things that we might do for Christ and for our fellow men, but our lives have been so empty of results that it all seems a failure. Ah! to many such an one there will be a resurrection into life eternal, full of a glory that tongue of man cannot depict; and the very sins that seem to beset us, those conditions within and without against which we have struggled, as it seemed to us with so little result, will prove to be the source and origin of that life which shall display itself hereafter.

On Good Friday the followers of Jesus Christ heard, with a dismay which I fancy we can never fully imagine, that awful cry from the Cross of the suffering Saviour, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me,"—the agonised cry of humanity, seeking and not finding, asking the explanation of the struggles and the failures

of its life, of the hardships and the agonies which it endures, the cry of many and many a soul, which in one form or another has gone up to God and still ascends when all our ideals vanish, our love is shattered, our life is ruined, and we can see no sign of the love of God about us, no explanation of the reason of our conditions which seems to admit of the controlling presence of a loving Father. How often it seems that wrong has won the ascendant, the world seems to be going backward, virtue is lost, the cause of right is defeated, lust, selfishness, greed, dishonesty are rampant and victorious, rewards are won by the wicked; for the godless there is wealth, there is pleasure, there is renown, there is success; and the successful are held in esteem among men! One could well suppose that God Himself was bestowing upon them the reward of their deeds. And here are others who have laboured to control themselves, who have sought to live a life of love, thoughtful of the needs of others, not seeking their own, unselfish, pure, diligent to do good—and they are uncared for. You know doubtless some such who have been counted failures, who have received not honour but dishonour, not joy and peace and gladness, but suffering and sorrow and distress. Do you wonder that there comes at times to thoughtful men and women, to men and women whose hearts burn with a desire to see God's kingdom established on earth, a sense of desolation, the feeling that He has forsaken His own, and the question whether in truth there be a God.

On Good Friday a little band of men who had followed Jesus of Nazareth slunk back from the tragedy

of the Cross to the poor upper chamber in Jerusalem, where they dwelt together, broken-hearted, with that horrible cry of their Master on the Cross ringing in their ears—"My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" So it was all a failure. They had given up everything and followed Him. He was gone. Their hope of the restoration of Israel had vanished. What was there to which to look forward? A few days later you find these men proudly standing before multitudes, absolutely convinced not only that God had not forsaken them, but that their Lord and Master, Jesus Christ, had risen from the dead, triumphant over that which man had always esteemed his greatest enemy—death; triumphant over sin and Satan. They could not tell you how He came to them, they could not explain the philosophy of His resurrection, but the plain fact they knew, and knew it with such overwhelming conviction that it changed not only their lives but the life of the world from that time on.

God does not forsake His own. It may look to you and me as though we were forsaken. It may look to us who strive and struggle for the coming of the kingdom of God, and pray that God's reign on earth may begin, as though the world were going backward, as though sin and greed and lust were rampant and victorious; but in the resurrection of Jesus Christ we have assurance of the victory of life over death, of light over darkness. That glorious resurrection means to you and me individual immortality; that the grave is not the end; that our feeble efforts shall find their reward and fruition in a life infinitely glorious.

But while Easter, with its tale of the Resurrection,

is full for us of the thought of a life after death which transforms and changes our present life, I would have you remember, further, the world meaning of this resurrection—that it is a perpetual prophecy of the victory of God and right, to the end that you and I may take heart and courage to go on and fight the fight, sure that though we may not here win that which we call victory, yet here also victory shall be won and God's kingdom shall be established upon earth; and all who have striven for the coming of that kingdom shall be sharers, if not in the triumph here on earth, yet in a triumph in heaven in which Christ shall give them the reward.

THE MYSTERY OF BIRTH AND DEATH

Acts v., 30: The God of our fathers raised up Jesus, whom ye slew, hanging him on a tree.

IF you follow religious discussions at all you must know that men are asking now, as they always have been asking, how could God become man? how could God be incarnate in Jesus Christ? If God is spirit, how could He become flesh? how could God dwell in a man's body? how could the infinite become finite? And if He dwelt in that body, what became of that body when he died? Could He take that body away with Him? Could matter turn into spirit? Could the finite become infinite?

Any one who thinks much must have asked himself at some time or other such questions. Many of you have doubtless asked yourselves these or similar questions, not once or twice but many times. Some of you have not found answers satisfactory to yourselves. Some of you are not communicants of the Church because you have not found satisfactory answers. If a satisfactory answer means one which explains precisely how this happened or could happen, then no answer can as yet be given, because we do not yet know enough about matter and spirit, finite and infinite, to explain their relations to one another.

This is not, however, an ignorance which affects only

the birth and death of Jesus, it affects the whole question of birth and death. There is a mystery behind the whole matter which we have not solved. We know the facts of birth and death, and that is all. If we could solve the mystery of our own birth and death, then we should understand, I doubt not, how Jesus could be born God, yet man, spirit dwelling in flesh, infinite in finite; and how that infinite could be again restored to its infinity, and of what nature was the body of our risen Lord. For the problems which are involved in the birth and resurrection of Jesus are in their essence the problems which are involved in the coming into the world and going out of the world of every child of man and God. Or, more fundamental still, the problems which are involved in the birth and resurrection of Jesus are in their essence the problems of the origin and the future of this world itself.

We have learned much, very much about this world and its formation, about the properties and possibilities of matter, and somewhat less, but still much, about life, and the laws of life. And particularly in the last generation has our advance in the knowledge of the laws and phenomena of life and force and matter increased with the most startling rapidity. And yet our ignorance is far vaster and more startling than our knowledge. Those who have advanced the furthest see most clearly how infinitely greater is the unknown before us than that which we have even in part explored.

What is life?

What is force?

What is matter?

Who can create matter? Matter exists, and we have found no way to destroy it or create it, neither can we tell out of what it came, nor into what it goes. Even our own bodies are ours to use only for a time. We can not take them away. They began in the bodies of our parents, as parts of those bodies, growing out of them, feeding on them. Our parents came in the same way from their parents, and so the chain goes back endlessly, for all that our philosophy can say, matter out of matter from eternity. We came into the world little fragments of matter, flesh and blood and bones, and we took matter into ourselves and grew to be larger fragments of matter. From the air and water we drank in certain ingredients; we consumed the bodies and produce of other animals, we took into ourselves seeds, and fruit, and stalks, and roots, and leaves, and barks of various vegetables and increased the amount of matter in our bodies. All this matter made matter. By and by we shall be put in the ground, and this matter will go into other matter. It will take more or less time to resolve it into other matter, according to the conditions, but sooner or later every particle of our present bodies will enter into other combinations and form part of other objects animate or inanimate. Not the slightest particle will vanish nor be lost. That much we know. The law of the Conservation of Matter is now well established. There is a certain amount of matter constituting our universe. There has always been the same amount of matter. It appears in all sorts of combinations, but it is always the same matter. Now it is part of a rock, anon it appears as a piece of an herb, now it is part of a man, now it is a gas, and now it is rock again. It is

like a kaleidoscope, where a few pieces of glass with a couple of reflecting surfaces produce countless different combinations. So far as science can yet see, matter has always been the same; it was there to begin with; none of it has ever been lost; no more has ever been created. That is as far as we can get. A certain amount of matter in existence, unmakable, indestructible. Did it make itself? Is it in its essence eternal? I think you will almost involuntarily say "No." If not, how did it come to be, and what shall it become? Here is the first problem of birth and death.

But science has discovered another law, the law of the Conservation of Force. Out of my window I can see men and machines drilling holes in the rock for purposes of blasting. Then, when the holes are prepared, dynamite is put in, electricity is applied to the dynamite by a wire from a portable battery, there is a sudden outburst of energy, and the rock is broken in pieces. Now that dynamite does not originate the energy. It is stored up energy gathered from various sources. It has been in existence before. The electricity is old force used over again. It may have been another form of force before, but it was in existence as force in some form or another. The same is true of the force applied to the rock through the steam drills. Not a particle of this force is new, created for this occasion. It is old force, used we do not know how many times over, then stored up and passed on to be used again. And the same is true of the force applied by men. When one of those strong men raises his sledge-hammer and strikes the rock a mighty blow, he applies force, he passes on force already in existence, he does not create the force any

more than he creates the sledge-hammer. Nor does the force which he applies pass out of existence when it has been applied. It does not even suffer the slightest diminution, but propagates new force, although never more force. If you lift your finger through the air you have used force and produced force, and you have produced just as much as you have used, neither more nor less. There was the same amount of force in existence a thousand years ago as to-day. You cannot create it, you cannot destroy it. For all that natural science can see, the same amount of force or energy was in the beginning, is now, and shall be for all eternity. What is more, force has always been combined with matter, and, as far as we can see, always must be, the two being interdependent in some manner. Now, then, was this unmakable and indestructible force always there, will it always continue to be there? Is it uncreated, eternal, final? I think again that every one must involuntarily say "No." But how and whence did it come and into what shall it resolve itself? Here is the second problem of birth and death.

But if the problems of the origin and hereafter of force and matter are so difficult, still far greater are the difficulties which science has encountered in the problem of the origin and the hereafter of life. Matter we can see, we can handle, we can weigh, although we can neither create nor destroy it; force is intangible, yet it is possible to measure and to define it, to see wherein it consists, to control and bind it; but life we cannot even define. Not only is it beyond our power to create it, but we do not know wherein it consists. It is there, and yet we cannot find it. We cannot place our hand

upon it, nor measure it, nor weigh it, nor even tell what it is.

A few years since the scientific world was agitated by a discussion of the origin of life. Some French scientists supposed they had discovered that life was self-creative, or, under certain conditions, originated out of dead matter. Milk and other fluids were sterilised and hermetically sealed in glass jars. After a time bacteria germs developed out of nothing, as was at first supposed; but Pasteur soon proved that this development of bacteria germs was due to carelessness of the experimenters, by which they had permitted germs from without to be introduced into the sterilised fluids. He conducted the same experiments with greater care and proved to the satisfaction of the world that matter once devitalised no life can come out of it.

Life comes only out of life, as force comes only out of force and matter out of matter; and force and matter cannot produce life. Such is the conclusion of science. But geology and astronomy have shown that there was a period in the history of this world when force and matter existed, but no life. At a certain stage of the world's history life was introduced into it. From where? Was it other life that produced it, and how did it produce it? You and I naturally answer, it was produced by God, the source of life; it came from Him. And when we are asked, how?—we say it was the Virgin Birth. It was not life producing life according to the ordinary conditions and limitations under which we see life produced about us, but it had its origin through the impregnation of the virgin earth from the divine source of life. The

virgin earth became the mother of that first life, but God Almighty was the father.

In this life resembles force and matter—that once in existence it propagates itself, but it differs, so far as science can perceive, in this important regard—that whereas force and matter are always the same in amount and merely continue in existence, life grows and multiplies, so that one life may be the source of many lives; and again, while force and matter are indestructible, so far as science can see, life is destructible.

But what is life? We know it only as an animating force, appearing in matter; it is intangible, not to be measured, and known to us only as it manifests itself in and through matter. Whether it exists or can exist separate from matter, it is beyond the power of science to say, because science has found no means of identifying it or determining it, but is only aware that there is a principle, to which it gives the name of life, which produces certain phenomena in matter. But so much science does perceive, that there are various kinds of life, as vegetable life, and animal life, and in these again many divisions and manifold genera, each particular form of life differing from the other, and each form capable of propagation only by its own kind, and capable of propagating only its own kind.

Science has conceived the possibility of reducing all of these various forms and kinds of life to one great life principle, and has sought to establish the connection between them, and to prove how one may pass over into another. To a certain extent it has succeeded in establishing the general principle of the connection of life, although it has not established in detail the pro-

cesses by which higher forms of life are developed from the lower. But at last life reaches a form different from all its other forms—where there is an element combined with it of self-reflection; a being which reasons upon its own condition, reasons out the laws of its own nature and of the nature of the universe in which it exists; a being which undertakes to work with and through those laws, to become a partner in the control of the universe—Man, consciously aspiring upward, aiming from the outset to be a god, and never halting in his progress through all the ages in which we know him. The mere vitality, the mere life that is in him is not so great as that which appears in certain other animals, and his power of propagating life is not so great. The amount of matter vitalised by each human life is less than the amount of matter vitalised by the life principle of many other animals, but there is a something connected with that life which differentiates it from all other lives. This is the something which we call intelligence, or reason, or spirit. To be sure this aspiring, upward-growing something is combined with another element, so that we find the individual man falling, stumbling, making himself like the beasts that are about him; we find the individual, or even many individuals, going backward—but the race man, mankind as a whole, is going always upward, impelled by what appears to us to be an irresistible force, and yet a force which he is so far able to comprehend that he can work with it.

You hold in your arms a little human baby, seven, eight, ten pounds of matter, differentiated from the matter which is about it by that mysterious something

which you call life, by means of which it moves, and by force of which you know that this lump of matter will develop and become something different from what now it is; differentiated from the animal life about it—from the little kittens or puppies—by a still more wonderful something which you do not seem to find there at the beginning, and yet which you know will come. It is less intelligent at first than a new-born rabbit. When that something comes into it which makes the difference, you cannot tell, nor how it comes. Intelligence, reason, spirit—you name it by different names, you define it by different definitions, and no name and definition is satisfactory, because you know so little about what it is—only that it is a wonderful something that has the power of transforming that matter animated with life, of making it different from everything else that is about it, lifting it above everything else that is in this world—but neither the life nor the spirit seem clearly to belong to that little lump of matter; you are only too painfully aware that they are alien to it, when you watch the struggle to keep life in that little body, and realise how easily the life which has come into that matter may depart out of it. How does life come into that body? How does that higher something which you call spirit come? Whence does it come? Have we here again the Virgin Birth? Was human life, with all that intellectual, spiritual something which distinguishes it from all other life, born out of other life, or was there a point where it began to be out of nothing—where the virgin conceived by the Holy Ghost, and a new life of spirit began in the world?

And where does life go to? Can it really be destroyed,

or is it only that we are unable to discern it when freed from matter? Force and matter are indestructible. Can we destroy life, or is it like them indestructible? Here you have the third problem of birth and death.

With regard to the mystery of the origin and of the end of human life, the life that is combined with intellect or spirit, you and I find the answer to the problem—the answer which God our Father has taught us—in Jesus Christ. Perhaps it may be that we find the answer, or a partial answer, to the other problems also in this same Jesus. From God comes life. To God goes life. If He created force and matter, then is He the parent by whom out of force and matter life and spirit were begotten. And it must be remembered, when we seek to understand the mysteries of the birth and the resurrection of Jesus, that He was not alone a man, but that He was also mankind; in whom we all of us, with all our powers and attributes, are summed up. There is a mystery surrounding His birth; there is a mystery surrounding His death and resurrection from the dead; there are difficulties which meet us when we seek to understand how these things could be; but they are not difficulties which belong merely to His story. They are difficulties which are inherent in the very nature of things, because we do not know what matter is; what life is; how they are related one to another; what are the future possibilities of matter.

If you pick up the Gospel narrative and read the story of the disappearance of the body of Jesus, the empty tomb in which that body had been laid and in which none was found, of the body that came through doors, appeared and disappeared, was matter and yet was not

matter, could be touched and handled, could eat and drink, and yet, as far as the apostles could understand, set at naught some of the fundamental laws of matter—you will see that they were mystified by the phenomena as much as you or I. These are naïve, simple statements of men who could not pretend to explain the way in which these things were done, and the very naïveté and simplicity with which the difficulties are stated, without any attempt at explanation, are, as the historian perceives, the best evidence of the truthfulness of the narrative. It is impossible to disbelieve, and those who have sought to explain away the facts according to our knowledge of the laws of matter have only introduced greater difficulties into the narrative, and involved themselves in hopeless contradiction. So, in one volume Renan asserts that without doubt Mary of Magdala, with the help of some of the apostles, came and stole the body of Jesus away, and in another he asserts with equal positiveness that the assertion that Mary Magdalene, or some of the apostles stole the body away, is absolutely without foundation and evidently false.

You and I speculate, and must speculate, on such things. We must use our reason; but if any one, ultra-rationalist on the one side or ultra-orthodox on the other should come to me and say—I can explain in their details these events of the birth and death of Jesus, I will not believe him until he first show me that he can explain the mystery of the birth and death of matter, and the birth and the hereafter of life. When our knowledge has advanced so far that we can create and destroy matter, and understand the relation to that matter of

life; when we are able to place our finger upon life and say, It is here, and analyse it and define it—then, and not till then, shall we be able fully to understand the mystery of the life and death of Jesus—born of the Virgin Mary, rose from the dead on the third day, who carried our humanity back to God our Father in Heaven. But the strange story which the apostles told of the body which vanished from the grave, of the man with whom they walked and whom they knew not until He was revealed to them in the breaking of bread, of Him who appeared in bodily form in the closed room where they were assembled and brake bread and ate it with them, and bade them touch the holes of the nails in His hands and the spear in His side—this strange story sounds to me like a dim prophecy of the hereafter of matter, when ceasing to be matter it shall return to Him from whom it came out, to the All Father, God.

THE REAL HEAVEN

Acts i., 11: Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing into heaven?

WITH the Birth and Resurrection the Ascension is counted the third great feast of the Incarnation. There is no mention of the Ascension in the Gospels of St. Matthew and St. John. They record the Resurrection and various appearances of Jesus to and among His disciples and apostles. It is manifest, however, from their account that after a relatively brief period during which He thus appeared among them He departed from them altogether. It is clear, also, from the accounts in St. Matthew and St. John, that it was the expectation of those writers that Jesus, having now departed from them, would shortly come back again in glory. An addition to the original Gospel of St. Mark tells us that Jesus was "received up into heaven and sat on the right hand of God," and there is no doubt that in that sense all the Gospel writers, and St. Paul also, believed in the ascension into heaven. But only St. Luke relates the story of the actual physical ascension, once at the close of the Gospel which bears his name, and once at the beginning of the Acts of the Apostles. It is on those two accounts, or that one account, that the external expression by the Church of its belief in the Ascension may be said to be founded.

Three hundred and fifty years ago, when the English Prayer-book was coming into existence, men thought they knew very exactly how the Ascension took place, and accordingly, in the fourth of those Articles of Religion which have since been relegated to the attic of our Prayer-book you find this statement: "Christ did truly rise again from death and took again his body, with flesh, bones, and all things appertaining to the perfection of Man's nature; wherewith he ascended into Heaven, and there sitteth, until he return to judge all Men at the last day." When men conceived of a physical heaven, existing somewhere in the skies above our heads, this expression of the Ascension created no difficulties. To-day it contradicts not only what we know of physical science, but also what we believe we have learned of the nature and being of our Lord and of the very nature of divinity.

The beginning of our Lord's life on earth, the way in which God came into man, His victory over death, His departure from earth, the way in which humanity was lifted into divinity, are alike shrouded in mystery. We note the event, but when we try to explain we can explain only that part which touches humanity. The side which touches divinity transcends our comprehension and our expression. Any language that we use must be imperfect.

All of you have seen a comet. First you read in the papers that some astronomer, with his great telescope, has located a comet in such and such a constellation. By and bye it becomes visible to the naked eye, very faint and vague at first, growing larger and more distinct as it draws nearer; and then, after having touched

our world for a brief space, it begins to vanish, breaking up and fading away. We know that the comet was in existence before it appeared to our eyes, or even to the eyes of the astronomers looking through the strongest telescopes that have been invented. We know that it continues to exist after it has passed out of our sight and ken. Very roughly I may use this figure of the comet to express the relation of the Incarnation to our life here, but only very roughly, for the figure is incomplete and imperfect.

But not only is the Incarnation mysterious, life itself is a mystery, a mystery in its beginning, a mystery in its ending. What life is, how it originates, we do not know. We cannot analyse it; gone, we cannot reproduce it. We know it only as it expresses itself in matter. Whence comes the life that enters into organic matter and so strangely transforms it and changes it, is dependent upon it and yet transcends it? Take the life out of this organic matter, and what is left? A form that in the briefest time decays, corrupts, and is dissolved again into the elements about it. Where has the life gone to? The relation of life to matter is mysterious, and equally mysterious the relation of spirit to matter. What are you and I? We are not these bodies in which we live, and yet we are dependent upon them. We are conditioned by them, and yet we are not contained in them. Take away an arm or a leg: have we cut off so much of the spirit or does the spirit remain unaffected? Where is its abode? We know the seats of life; where is the seat of spirit?

How do I stand related to this body? Am I a part of it? Is it a part of me, or is it merely the tenement

which I inhabit for a while; and if the latter, what becomes of me when I have gone out of this tenement? Do I need another body in which to live? What shall be the nature of that body?

With our increased knowledge we can no longer give to these questions those ready answers, or those explanations and definitions of those answers which seemed so plain and simple to our ancestors. The increase of our knowledge, the opening up to us of vast worlds, realms of force and life, revealing possibilities which our ancestors never dreamed of, have given resurrection and ascension a newer and vastly more glorious meaning, but in doing so they have taken away from us that precision of definition which enabled men to write the Articles of Religion, from which I quoted a moment since. Now and then I find men complaining because of this and saying: our faith is being taken from us; for the literal facts our fathers believed in these new teachers are proposing things vague and intangible, which they tell us are the spiritual verities that constitute the real essence of the faith. To us they sound like meaningless words. Without something tangible how can I believe?

I scarcely know how to answer those who ask questions such as this. But this I may say: There are certain things, and those among the most real facts of the universe, facts which underlie the things you see and so can define, which can be expressed only as it were in the language of poetry. The highest reaches of philosophy and the highest reaches of theology, which is the philosophy of religion, are in a sense poetic. Indeed I may say that the highest reaches of mathematics, called

the most precise of all sciences, are poetic. When the mathematician reasons of the lines which approach one another through infinity and yet never meet, when he tells you of lines diverging to infinity, he is really, with all the precision of his science, in the same realm of the inapprehensible, of that which transcends experience and yet which appeals to reason, as the philosopher or the theologian. All these are things which men cannot touch nor handle nor taste, but the more man advances in knowledge the more of this sort of truth he learns to know and believe. To the man who has not studied the higher mathematics are a bewilderment. Their fundamental propositions seem to him unreal and vague, whereas to the man who has studied them all is precision; and yet it is impossible for him to define or explain those propositions to the man whose reason is not sufficiently developed in that particular direction to enable him to comprehend the theory.

Now, to turn back to the matter of the Ascension, think what the old idea of the universe was. You all have read of the ancient miracle plays, where the stage was arranged on three levels. The highest story was heaven, the middle story earth, and the lowest story hell. This represented the idea which, on into the Middle Ages, scholar and peasant alike entertained of the universe. A world round and flat, spanned by the arch of heaven, with hell beneath,—this was easy to understand. Such a conception was the very commonplace of life. All language was framed on that idea, the language of natural science as of theology. Even to-day, in our ordinary forms of speech, we have not divested ourselves of the old language, albeit the conception of

the universe which gave the meaning to that language has changed. It never occurs to us that there is any unreality or falsehood in our speaking of the rising of the sun, although the smallest child in a grammar school can tell you that the sun does not rise and go around the earth and descend and set on the other side again, as is implied in the language which we use, and which was the belief of the men who first used that language. How much more men have now learned about the universe, and what struggles and even persecutions preceded the adoption of each new great fact of knowledge! The Copernican system, evolution—to mention only two of those things which absolutely changed the ideas men entertained of the world, and rendered it necessary to restate everything which men thought—by what throes and travail they were born! And indeed the birth pangs of evolution are not yet altogether passed.

To-day it sometimes seems as though the advances in knowledge are so rapid that we scarcely appreciate what they mean. Take electricity: those of you of my own age who studied physical science at the same time that I did would be laughed at if you were to propound to-day as facts the things which we were then taught and which we believed with regard to the nature of electricity. Electricity itself is the same. We know much more about it and we use it much more effectively to-day. I doubt whether we are as exact in our definition and explanation of its nature and its essence now, however, as men were fifty years ago. The very increase of our knowledge has revealed the vastness of our ignorance, and forbids those easy defini-

tions which satisfied us in an earlier stage. This lack of precision does not mean that our knowledge is less, but that it is greater. Or take that new metal, radium, and consider the suggestions with regard to matter itself which have come from the observation of its strange properties! Everything seems to be changing in the scientific world. Does that mean that we know less about matter and our universe? It means that we know so much more that the definitions which were once given no longer suffice us. So also the world has learned more of Christ and more of God, more of the mysteries of the Divine nature and more of the mysteries of our own human nature; and it is because we have learned more of these things that men are refusing to be content with the old definitions and the old explanations.

A while ago, almost any evening, less than a quarter of a mile from this spot you might have seen a crowd of men, women, and children gathered, waiting for the appearance of a ghost, which manifested itself in the air against the wall of a building. The larger part of the crowd probably consisted of idle curiosity seekers, and doubtless many of them knew that such a ghostly appearance was impossible. But a considerable number of those persons were still in that stage of ignorance with regard to the universe about them in which it seems possible that spirits should manifest themselves in that particular manner. There are yet among us, with all our schools, with all our education, a great number of very ignorant men and women among whom survive beliefs which belong historically to a period centuries ago. In some parts of the world,

like Palestine, you will find the mass of the people still in the same condition of ignorance and consequent superstition in which they were one thousand, two thousand, or three thousand years ago. To such people anything may happen. What they call miracles may occur at any moment; but on the other hand they are utterly incapable of comprehending the greatest and most really wonderful miracles revealed in God's dealings in the universe about us and in human history. Such things transcend their knowledge, or if they see the fact they fail to grasp its miracle. Their interest and their comprehension are like those of little children. To these people it is always apt to seem that the man who does not believe that a ghost may suddenly show itself lacks belief in the spirit world, that the man who does not believe such a thing is possible has no faith in miracles; and, on the other hand, to the man who knows more about the laws of the universe, who believes with all his heart in the almighty power of God, who inspires and who is that law, to the man who is stirred profoundly day by day by the miraculous which he sees about him and within him, who really believes in a spirit world as a reality more real than this material world, the belief of those others seems unreal, childish, and material.

But if we do not believe in a heaven that is somewhere above our heads, located in some *place*, on a Mount Olympus, on the mountain of God, in some star, or beyond the farthest ether, in some remote and limitless unknown, what then is heaven? From what we have learned in later years of the properties of matter, the way solid substances are permeated with what, for

lack of better words, we call ether, of the waves or particles of matter which pass through other matter, comes to us a suggestion of possibilities which our forefathers never dreamed of: possibilities which we can yet scarce translate into language, at which we can only hint, but which are full of hope and joy, giving us a new conception of the closeness of God, of the abiding, actual presence of the Saviour, whom yet we cannot see nor touch; possibilities of the presence with and among us of heaven—a heaven no longer remote in space, but close at hand, in and through the very place in which we exist. And this makes of life a new thing; it reads new meaning into those old words of the writer of the Hebrews, telling of the great cloud of witnesses which compass us about. Under the influence of such thought the Ascension becomes more real, and, if I may so express myself, more practical, something which touches our present life, which concerns us every day. As the birth of Christ means that God, in whom we live and move and have our being, was verily incarnate, very man, so the Ascension means that very man is in and with very God, that the humanity of Jesus is divine, and that therefore also our humanity may become divine, being united with God. It opens to us limitless possibilities, man exalted to the right hand of God. Oh, the glory that it sheds on our lives, the inspiration that it offers to the whole human race! No wonder that angel messengers bade the men of Galilee cease staring into the skies, forgetful of their work on earth.

I take it that the whole story of the Incarnation, from birth to resurrection and ascension, teaches us this

truth:—that this possibility of divine being in us can become a reality only as we enter into union with God, that Jesus lived among us to bring us into such union with God, and that when we say we accept Him as our Saviour and cast ourselves upon Him for salvation, we mean that we surrender ourselves, our will for selfish pleasure and self-indulgence, and self-acquisition, and self-glory to Him, by entering into His life of service and of sacrifice. That and that only is to believe on Him, and though we no longer see Him, we need not stand looking into heaven to find Him. Here on earth, about us, among us, we must first seek Him; here we may enter into His life; and thus, made one with Him, we have already entered into heaven, albeit our eyes be not yet opened to behold the glory of it.

THE PERSONALITY OF THE SPIRIT

St. John xvi., 7: It is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I go, I will send him unto you.

WE have no one word which exactly translates the Greek word here rendered Comforter. If we translate one meaning of the word into English, we leave the other meanings untranslated. The Greek word means advocate, or helper,—the counsel who pleads your cause before the judge. So it is used in the First Epistle General of St. John, second chapter, first verse: "If any man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous: and he is the propitiation for our sins." The same word is used there which is used in this passage, but there it is used of Christ, who in His exaltation is our Advocate before the Father in heaven, and it is translated Advocate. Here, where it is rendered Comforter, it is used of the Holy Spirit, who was to take the place of Christ with the Apostles after His ascension, to lead them to a deeper knowledge of the truth by His counsel—the Spirit of Truth, He is also called in St. John's Gospel,—and to impart to them the divine help needed to enable them to undergo trials and persecutions on behalf of Christ. He was to take the place of Christ, to bring to their knowledge those things which Christ had spoken to them; to teach them the meaning of Jesus' life as they had not under-

stood it while He was with them. He was to be a comforter, giving them divine strength in their hour of weakness, in their loneliness giving them assurance of the presence of God.

My dear friends, some of you have taught me in your lives a great deal about the meaning of this promise. I have seen some of you bereft of those whom you loved, and as I have watched you I have seen a new something come into your lives, which has raised them above the level of your former lives. I have seen a man, uncouth and rough, self-assertive and inconsiderate of the more tender, higher feelings of those about him,—lacking in delicacy, I suppose we should say,—refined and made tactful and delicately considerate through bereavement. I have seen selfish lives made unselfish; and sometimes even faces have been transfigured so that as I have looked I have felt that I saw the radiance of heaven, the beauty of the spirit world.

But how does all this come about? It is not bereavement alone that produces it. Some of the most painful sights that I have ever seen have been connected with bereavement,—characters hardened and embittered, lives made morose and sullen. It is not bereavement, but spiritual intercourse. It is that in one case a Comforter has come and in the other case there is none; that in the one case a sense of spiritual communion exists, in the other there is only the sense of loss. How beautiful it is when the life of the one that is gone on continues itself spiritually here in the hearts and lives of its dear ones,—the same life, only purified of its dross, made more beautiful, the good parts alone surviving. Have you not known one, dear to you it may be, who

lived a beautiful life here, a life far from perfect truly, but still beautiful for some at least of its traits, and then when that life passed on into the beyond these good traits and beautiful traits have come home to you, or to those who were still closer to the one that is gone than you are; have come home with a force which they did not possess while that person was here? They have been dwelt upon, lived over, they have moulded and affected your life, or the lives of those about you, and then they have gone forth out of your life to help and bless others, and mould them in their turn into something better and higher. It is in this wise that the dear ones that have gone live on spiritually here on earth. It is thus that a Comforter and Helper, an Advocate, comes to us from them, assuring us of what was good and beautiful and true in their lives; holding it up before us as their lesson, their teaching, their will; and out of the very love which we felt toward them making an impression on our hearts and lives which they otherwise never could have made. While they lived with us and we could see them, hear them, speak with them, touch them, there were other things that we thought of. Those things which were the divine in them, the very best and highest, were covered over, obscured in our apprehension by so much else that their lives seemed to affect ours comparatively but little. Much as we loved them, they never, while they were with us, could mould us for good or evil as now they do when they have gone on.

Ah, beloved, you have all seen that which I have seen! You have all known spiritual influences working on the lives of some who are here among us! It is my part

Sunday after Sunday to preach to you from this pulpit. It may be that with God's help I bring you sometimes lessons of wisdom or comfort, but if I do it is largely because I learn them as I go in and out among you and see God's Spirit working in you; as I come to understand from your lives the meaning of the life and teaching of Christ Jesus. Out of what I have seen among you of this spiritual presence, of the greater power that comes from that than from the actual living presence, there has come to me a better understanding of the words of our Lord about the need that He must depart, about the Comforter that He would send to us all.

I do not wish to press too far this explanation of Christ's teaching about the Comforter who should come to take His place, and yet I think that you may, if you have sometimes been perplexed about that Comforter, find help in this suggestion. What the spiritual influence of the lives which you and I have known is to us individually, that the Holy Spirit whom Jesus sends is to the world in relation to Him. While Jesus was here with His Apostles, much as they loved Him, they could not grasp His teaching nor the meaning of His life. Do you remember how when He and they were on their way together to Jerusalem, where He was to be crucified, they were quarrelling with one another as to who should have the posts of honour in His kingdom? Their hearts were full of selfish interests. It did not mean that they did not love Him, but it meant that they did not grasp the real meaning of His life and teaching, the real nature of His divinity and of His kingdom. It meant, moreover, that in their personal attachment to Him they felt a jealousy of one another, each desiring the closest

place and closest contact for themselves, and begrudging it to one another.

His death did not diminish their affection for Him, it multiplied it many-fold, and it purified it so that there was no longer envy or jealousy, or even thought of self in their love. The divine became clearer to them and more glorious, and His life assumed a meaning which without that death and separation it never could have had. Happier, in one sense, I cannot say that their lives were, when Jesus was taken from them; nobler, and greater, and higher they were, however, with a capacity for happiness which they did not possess before, for a higher happiness, a grander happiness. Jesus had sent the Spirit of Truth, the Comforter, the Advocate, the Helper, to take His place, and that Spirit had made clear the truth which was hidden from their eyes before, and had helped them into a new and higher life.

Now it may seem to you at first thought that that Spirit is only an influence. I think it is more difficult for people to understand that the Holy Spirit is a person than for them to understand that Father and Son are persons. Perhaps that is the reason why in the actual practice of religion the Spirit is so apt to be forgotten. The early liturgies of the Church are full of the thought of the Holy Spirit. All blessing takes place through the Holy Spirit, by the presence and indwelling of the Spirit. The bread and the wine of the Lord's Supper are sanctified by the Spirit; the water in Baptism is sanctified by the Spirit to the mystical washing away of sins. But as you go on in the history of the Church you find, at least in the West, this doctrine of the Spirit

disappearing, until at the time of the Reformation you may say that, so far as the liturgical use of the Roman Church, and of all its dependent Western Churches, is concerned, the doctrine of the Holy Spirit had been abandoned. Men asked for something tangible, even material. Father, Son, gave them tangible and material ideas; but even these did not seem to be near enough, present enough; and so the Virgin and all the saints came in as the objects of prayer and worship.

We have gone back to the primitive use in the Holy Communion, in Baptism, in all our services. We pray for the blessing of the Holy Spirit, recognising that the Holy Spirit is the present person of the Trinity, the one with whom we come individually in contact here and now, and through whom we enter into communion with Son and Father. But for all that, I think that many people feel that there is a remoteness and a vagueness in this doctrine of the Spirit, because our idea of what is meant by person in the divinity is false. We are always thinking of the persons in the divinity as being persons like ourselves, which is entirely incorrect. It is difficult for us to realise the existence of anything that is not material. Force, power, influence, seem to us unreal things, only modes of communication. Matter, which is tangible to our outward senses, seems to us to be the real thing. But science is teaching us more and more that matter is the unreal thing, that it is only a mode of force, a mode of power; that the real thing is not matter, but the force, the influence, the spirit that is behind it. Your true person and my true person are not our outward forms. Let one that does not know us, that has never seen us before, come and look at us. He

sees a certain amount of flesh and blood, clothed in certain conventional garments, so that but a small part of the surface of this flesh and blood is exposed to sight. He could tell you that we weigh about so much, that we are about so tall, that we have dark hair or light hair, blue eyes, or brown or black, a fair skin or a dark skin, sallow or ruddy, and the like. But does that describe your person or my person? Is that you or I? We are what we stand for, what we have done, what clusters about us. A little of our nature, of ourselves, may look out through our faces or our eyes; more speaks in our voices and the thoughts that we express, and still more tells itself in our deeds. It is the spiritual existence, the unseen, the intangible, with all its thoughts, fancyings, and imaginings, its aspirations and its achievements clustering about it, that makes the real self, the true you or I.

So it is with divinity: Fatherhood rather than a father, Sonship rather than a son, should perhaps be our method of designating the first and second persons of the Trinity, so that we may get rid of the false and material idea of person which we so often have; and then we should better realise the reality, the personality of the Spirit of God, representing Jesus Christ here on earth, bringing home more and more to the minds of men the beauty and glory of that life and character, making the world feel more and more that that is true divinity, inspiring in your heart and in mine an ever greater and truer love for Jesus the Christ; a love which must renovate, change, regenerate our natures. It is by that love of the true Jesus the Christ, that spiritual love which shows us not merely a man work-

ing among His disciples here on earth, but which brings home to us all He meant, and all He stood for, revealing Him to us in the good and the divine in all that is about us; revealing Him to us in everything that is best in ourselves, by calling out of us love and self-sacrifice wherever we see any one that has need of us—it is by that love that we are truly united with Christ and with the Father.

To-day, Whitsunday, the Church commemorates the divine gift of the Holy Ghost to the world in a sense in which the world had not possessed it before,—the Holy Ghost, not merely as the spirit of good, the divine working in man, as it had always worked; but the Holy Ghost the Comforter, the Advocate of Jesus Christ in the world; advocating with the world His life as the perfect divine life, as salvation from sin, comforting the world with the promise of the fulfilment of that life in all mankind, comforting the world, in a little corner of which Jesus the Nazarene had lived, and taught, and worked, and suffered, by holding up before all the world the glorious picture of the life that man may live; glorifying human life by the vision.

THE JUDGMENT

St. John iii., 17–19: God sent not the Son into the world to judge the world; but that the world should be saved through him. He that believeth on him is not judged: he that believeth not hath been judged already, because he hath not believed on the name of the only begotten Son of God. And this is the judgment, that light is come into the world, and men loved the darkness rather than the light; for their works were evil.

HERE is a statement of God's plan in sending His Son Jesus the Christ into the world, and how salvation is to be obtained through Him. A man must believe in Him; if he do not believe his doom is sealed, he is already judged. And this is his judgment: Christ Jesus gave him light to see what was good and what was bad and he did not want the light, he did not want to see, he preferred the darkness because what he did was evil. The text teaches salvation by faith, faith in Jesus Christ. But see what that involves,—love of the light, forsaking of darkness, and consequently good works. No one can be saved without good works. Faith does not mean confession of the name of Jesus, in the sense merely of acknowledging Him to be divine, the only begotten Son of God who was crucified to save you. Such an acknowledgment is not even an absolute essential of saving faith, for Jesus Himself has said that a man might blaspheme Him, deny His name, that is, refuse

to believe Him to be the Christ, the Messiah, the Son of God, and yet be saved. Whosoever denies the spirit of the doctrine of Christ Jesus (that is the sin against the Spirit), whosoever prefers darkness rather than light because his works are evil, he it is who "hath not believed on the name of the only begotten Son of God."

St. Paul condemns the doctrine that a man is saved by works, and declares that it is by faith that men are saved; and St. James condemns the doctrine of salvation by faith, saying that the devils believe and tremble; they have faith but where are their works? "Show me thy faith without thy works, and I will show thee my faith by my works." Both are coming to the same thing from different sides. St. Paul saw men, both his own compatriots and Gentiles, setting their hopes on a sort of thing that they called works,—sacrifices, prayers, readings, tithings, temple-goings, taking part in the feasts, washings, fastings, alms-givings. It was this profane and criminal humbugging of themselves and others which he denounces under the name of works. St. James, on the other hand, is speaking to men who have turned faith into a cant phrase to cover lawlessness, who would say, I love Jesus, and be immoral, or dishonest, or unloving to their fellow-men. That sort of faith, says St. James, belongs also to devils, and the man who has faith like that will find his place among the devils. Aye, such a man Christ Jesus cannot save, for he is judged already, he has chosen darkness, his works are evil. Show your faith by your works, says St. James. Yes, not works in the sense in which St. Paul was speaking of works, not mere forms, but deeds, works in that sense. Go, do something for others, help

those that are in need—perform the works of Christ Jesus himself.

That is the sort of belief which St. John means, and the faith which St. Paul means,—to so believe in Christ Jesus that you aim to be like Him. That it is to believe in Jesus Christ, and the man who does not believe in the name of the only begotten Son of God in that sense, who is not appropriating to himself that life, who is not seeking to follow in the aims and details of his life the example of the life of Jesus of Nazareth, does not believe in Christ one whit more than the devils do; and the sacrifice of the Son of God upon the cross is of no more benefit to him than it is to the devils. He "hath been judged already." Light is come into the world, and he has loved the darkness rather than the light, for his works are evil. The faith of which St. Paul speaks, and the belief of which St. John speaks, are life, character. Those are the important things, those are the essentials; not works in the sense of forms, but faith and works in the sense of a character moulded after the pattern of the character of God, of a life that manifests in its every deed the effort to live unto God, to live a life of truth and love, to forget ourselves as our Lord Christ forgot himself, living and dying for us.

The faith that is needed for our salvation is not and cannot be a stumbling block in our way, it is a help. There is absolutely not one single dogma that is, according to Christ's teaching, essential to salvation, not even a belief, in the dogmatic sense, in His own person and mission. "God sent not his son into the world to judge the world." He sent Him to help us, to save us. No dogma can save, no heresy of doctrine in itself con-

demns; no forms can save, and even the lack of all connection with the visible Church, its forms and sacraments, does not of necessity judge a man. The Son of God did not come to judge the world. The judgment of any man lies in the fact that his works are evil, that he prefers darkness rather than light.

Do not misunderstand. Doctrines are not useless things, neither are forms. Right doctrines and right forms are of inestimable value, and, as our Catechism has it, speaking of the sacraments of Baptism and the Supper of the Lord, they are, in the ordinary conditions of life, "necessary to salvation." But in the ultimate sense, in considering the fundamental principles of things, they are not essentials, because they are the means to an end, and that end is life, character.

Why do we go to church? Because there is any merit in it? As an act of merit there is just as much value in our going to a heathen temple. We are here not as an act of merit, but to seek an inward, spiritual communion with God, to help us to bring our characters into conformity with His law, that is with Himself, for His law is the expression of Himself. For this end, also, Christ Jesus came, the Son of God, made man, to help us to become one with God. Belief in Him is of no use if it means only that you hold the correct doctrine of His Incarnation, the Eucharist, etc. Flatly, if that is all the belief a man has, if his belief do not involve oneness with God, in the Spirit of Christ, he might exactly as well believe in the incarnation of a Buddha; the one would help him as much or as little as the other. Saving faith is not belief in a fact, not belief in the facts of the life and death of our Lord, but such a real belief in

His character that we come into union with His life, and such union with Christ is union with God the Father and eternal life.

And now, further, who or what is this God the Father with whom we must come into communion, into oneness, if we would live for ever? He is not something external to you, a giant of power and wisdom whom you cannot apprehend, and who cannot comprehend you. You are divine. God is within you as much as without you. In Him ye live and move and have your being. It is in that divinity that the possibility of our eternal life lies; it is the development of our divine nature, its growth through the infinite ages, as we develop more and more in the image of God, as we grow and grow for ever into the stature of the perfect man, the eternal sons of God. It is a constant growth of happiness,—a growth of love, of truth, of all the possibilities of the glorious divine nature within us, the feeble consciousness of which even now gives us a sense of power, of grandeur, of happiness, of satisfaction, which nothing else can give. It is a development of our true selves, our own unhampered, undisguised individualities, for the higher a man rises, the more the noble qualities, that is, the divine existence within him, are developed, the more marked, the more emphatic his individuality becomes. And so the higher we rise toward the great centre of all divinity, the more closely we approach the perfection of our divine natures, the eternal sonship of God, the more rounded and complete our being, our individuality becomes.

But this salvation, this eternal felicity of divine development, belongs only to the man who gives play to his soul, that is, who seeks to develop the divine, the

good and the noble that is within him, who believes with his life on the name of the only begotten Son of God. The cross of Christ cannot save wolves, nor swine, nor vultures, nor foxes. The man who makes himself a beast, who surrenders himself to the beastly nature that is within him, who chooses the ignoble, the sensual, the selfish, the dishonourable, instead of the noble, the spiritual, the unselfish, the honourable, the true,—that is the man who does not believe on the name of the only begotten Son of God, however loud his protestations to the contrary; that is the man who is becoming a beast, who is forfeiting his divine nature, and with it every possibility of the eternal and glorious development of the sons of God. What possibilities of heaven could exist for such men, any more than for a pack of ravening wolves or a herd of wallowing swine? The possibilities of heaven lie in the character of a man, and so it is that God sent His Son not to judge the world, but to save the world by a life and death, belief in which might help to mould our characters. If a man make choice of Jesus Christ as his master and his pattern, believing in Him as his Saviour from the evil, casting himself upon His sacrifice, and not upon his own wisdom to save him from wrong-doing, then he has found a help, a succour, which priests and prophets longed for and could not find.

All men, whether they will or no, are preparing for the future life as surely as the boy is preparing to be a man. Every man, the whole world over, is developing the worldly, devilish, beastly side of his nature, or the true, loving, and divine side of it. Jesus has shown us what is divine, what we should aim at, what we can be; and to believe in Him is to accept that object-lesson to

show us what to do. Belief in Him means the acceptance of that life as our pattern, so that we judge right and wrong, good and bad, by no other standard than the perfect standard of our Lord Jesus Christ. In all that we say we ask ourselves whether our Lord Jesus would so have spoken. Would He have uttered a doubtful jest, would He have spoken an insinuatingly fault-finding word, or told a disparaging little story about a friend behind his back, would He have spoken in irritation a word intended to hurt the feelings of another, or would He have allowed a word of abuse to pass His lips? In all that we do we ask if our Lord Christ would so have done. Would He have earned money in any way which would not bear the most searching light of publicity, or in any way which, while technically correct, as the laws of human justice judge correctness, injures any other, never mind how remote from us; would He have indulged His senses in any immoderation, in anything which could injure His body, His character, His usefulness, or those of another? To believe on the name of the Son of God is to seek thus to turn the light on all the dark places of our nature; to so believe that we aim to make our lives as good as His; to do in each circumstance just exactly what we honestly believe that He would have done; and so to believe means to obtain an inestimable, incomparable aid in the hard struggle against the beastly and devilish part of our nature, which, I take it, every man, at least in the moments when he stops and thinks of himself, would like to conquer if he had the strength.

We believe that Jesus was the only begotten Son of God, because He was a perfect manifestation of the at-

tributes of divinity, which are summed up in truth and love. We know God through the Son, for no man hath ascended up into heaven save this man, who verily came down from heaven; if then we know God through Him, we know God through man, for in the man Jesus of Nazareth was God revealed. And as we know God through man, so only through man may we reach God. In the only begotten Son of God is all mankind united, summed up, as it were. In Jesus of Nazareth were summed up in their perfection all those divine elements which we find scattered through the race of man. In Him was revealed the perfect Son of God, the only begotten Son of God. And if that be so and we believe in Him, and hence love and seek to imitate the divine perfections of His nature, then too we must admire and seek to imitate the divine elements—the good, and the noble, and the true—which we find in other children of God. Something is wrong with us, our belief is not full and true and real, if we find ourselves admiring worldly people, selfish people, ungodly people, and choosing them for our associates, instead of unworldly, unselfish, true, pure people. What do we admire in them? why do we choose them? Because we have an unconfessed love of the things of the world, the flesh, and the devil, which we profess to have renounced. If I really believe in Jesus of Nazareth, knowing Him to be the only begotten Son of God, accepting His life for my life, as such belief involves, then I must know and love the sons of God in whom God is now manifest among men.

My belief, if it is a true belief, is not a belief merely in the one perfect manifestation of God in man; it is a belief in the divine which He manifested, it is a belief

in love and truth wherever I find it, a love for, and kinship, and communion with all good men, who manifest in their lives love and truth. The democracy of the kingdom of heaven,—and remember that the kingdom of heaven, as Jesus used the expression, meant something in this earth, and not merely something in the world to come, and that no man enters the kingdom of heaven in the future life except as he enters it here,—the democracy of the kingdom of heaven is the most levelling democracy that men have ever imagined. In that kingdom there is not a shadow of distinction of rank, wealth, birth, or race; all these material and worldly distinctions are cast aside. Full belief in the Son of God means full brotherhood with all the sons of God. It means that we love them,—not merely that we profess love in a general way, and are in a general way interested in their welfare, but that we fulfil toward each individual the royal law, which is the law of the children of the kingdom—that we do to each person, whatever his position, his social condition, his country, or his race, precisely what we would have done to ourselves; that we think ourselves into each other person's place. We cannot love God whom we have not seen, except through our brother men whom we have seen. The only test of our love of God, and of the only begotten Son of God who manifested God to man, is our love for our fellowmen. To study our society, and then to study the society in which Jesus of Nazareth moved, the tests of fellowship and social intercourse which He set up, must serve to show us how very dimly we have yet learned to apprehend the Christianity of our Master, how unbelieving is our professed belief.

BIG THIEF AND LITTLE THIEF

St. Matthew vii., 21: Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven.

A MAN cannot live a life which he knows to be wrong, and make his peace with God by penance, or prayers, or gifts. A man cannot make money in ways which are wrong, dishonest, injurious to others, and then make his peace with God by giving great gifts to the Church. He may succeed in making his peace with the authorities of the Church, he may be received into honour by them, and be praised and treated as one of God's saints, —but he has not made his peace with God. At the last day, when he shall stand before the Judge and say: "Lord, Lord, did I not prophesy in Thy name by building churches and seminaries? Did I not cast out the devils of vice and misery in Thy name by endowing asylums, and hospitals, and missions? In Thy name, O Lord, I have done great works, erecting universities, and libraries, and monuments, so that all men have heard of my goodness for Thy name's sake"; then, we are told, the Lord will say: "I never knew you: depart from me ye that work iniquity." That is, He will say to them: You have not been working for me, you have been working for the devil.

The man who makes his money in an improper way,

and then seeks to win himself a place in the kingdom of God by building churches, and endowing universities, seminaries, missions, and other charities, may succeed in getting the very best pew in the richest and most pious church; he may become the sworn friend of godly pastors; he may figure as the director of a dozen charitable institutions; he may sit on many platforms and very loudly denounce vice at public meetings; but never in any such way can he enter into the kingdom of God.

God does not condone fraud, and the frauds which the imperfect laws of man cannot touch are tried in the court of God Almighty exactly as though they were midnight burglary or highway robbery. The man who has amassed his millions by railroad-wrecking and stock-watering, by controlling councils and legislatures, by ingenious deals through which the money in equity belonging to others has, by no process punishable by human law, passed into his possession, is tried and convicted in the court of God on the vulgar charge of theft. There is no use there in giving enormous retainers for the very best counsel to defend him on his trial. The most pious priests and eloquent preachers cannot save him from the clutches of the law of God, nor even win delay. Neither can he bribe the jurors; and the sheriff that receives him will not allow him to escape on any pretext, nor for any sum. He must serve his term with safe-burglars, pickpockets, footpads, train-robbers, sneak-thieves, confidence men, and the like. With them is his portion in the hereafter. God knows no difference between them. He classes them all together, —enemies of society, enemies of the state, enemies of righteousness, enemies of God. He has the same con-

demnation for the man who robs you of your purse and the man who contrives to relieve the public of $50,000,000; they are in His sight equally loathsome, equally vulgar, equally criminal. No character that priests or pastors can give the big thief is going to make him any less hideous in God's sight than the common burglar; no retainer which he may give them to plead his plea, in the shape of churches and charities, is going to help him get free from the awful condemnation of God, his Judge. Every one who reads our Lord's words must see that He was speaking of just such pious scamps when He said, "Not every one that saith unto me Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven." Those churches, hospitals, asylums, universities, libraries, missions, and the like, are their cry of "Lord, Lord"; and when they utter that cry in that particular manner there are plenty of pious men who will tumble over one another in the attempt to take them by the hand, and smile lovingly upon them, and raise their eyes heavenward, and say: "Oh, my dear sir, you are doing a noble work for the Lord; the Lord has indeed blessed the whole community in giving you this blessing of wealth; you are preaching the Lord's name like a prophet, you are casting out legions of devils and working very miracles by your benevolence." By-and-bye this man comes to the gates of heaven; he is very sure of admittance; he says: "Here are my testimonials from the Lord's representatives. They show how I have prophesied, cast out devils, and worked miracles." But the Lord says to him, "I never knew you: depart from me, ye workers of iniquity."

It is astonishing how men will blind themselves to the very nature of God, and to the character of His dealings with men. And it has been the same through all the ages of the world's history. Here is a poor savage who is going on a marauding expedition to capture cattle or slaves; and he prays first to his god, and offers sacrifices, and receives the blessing of the priest on his enterprise. Here is the Mexican border smuggler who goes and confesses to the priest, gets his absolution on condition of a penance and a gift to the Church, and goes out light-hearted to engage in more smuggling, with the same results. Here is a stock-rigger, a railroad-wrecker, who founds with a part of the proceeds of his operations a seminary to teach men how to preach the Gospel, or builds a church to preach it in, and gains therefrom new strength and courage to carry on his nefarious projects. These three men are on a par, so far as their attempted dealings with God are concerned. They have not the least idea what God is. They are, whatever they may call themselves, all alike devil-worshippers, to whom apply our Lord's awful words of condemnation: "I never knew you: depart from me, ye workers of iniquity."

"Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, . . . but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven." People will keep thinking of God as some being outside of us who can be propitiated and made to give us a reward by means of something which we do or say. That is heathenism, unbelief, devil-worship, whether it calls itself Buddhism, Mohammedanism, or Christianity, or whatsoever else. God is love; God is truth; the law of virtue and integrity and loving-kindness is His will,

and unless a man set his heart to do that will he cannot know God and the eternal life which is in the knowledge of God. Neither is the law of God in any way an arbitrary or an accidental thing, so that some other condition of our eternal happiness could or can be given to man than the acceptance, for the aim and rule of our lives, of this divine law. It is essential, because it is the fundamental law of the being of God, and of all that is divine; and our eternal happiness lies in our becoming like God, being united with Him, and pervaded by His Spirit. That, and that only, is heaven and eternal life.

But a man may say: "Is it not a noble and a glorious use of wealth to endow missions, build hospitals, churches, colleges, and asylums? Supposing a man to have gotten his wealth in a doubtful or wrong manner, what better amends can he make than to use it in such a way? and can he not even do more good by this means than he has done harm in acquiring it? and do you not believe that a man who does such a good work as that will be accepted of God and forgiven?"

Supposing that a man had picked another man's pocket of five dollars. If he came to you and gave you five cents of that towards building churches, and ten cents towards sending out missionaries, and five cents towards educating men for the ministry, and ten cents towards erecting a hospital, would you shake him by the hand and assure him that he was doing more good than he had ever done harm, and that he was a noble Christian who would surely be accepted of God? You certainly would say that the very first condition of repentance must be restitution, that he must be throughly sorry for what he had done, and must turn

about, lead a new life, and give up that life of robbing altogether.

The conditions are the same, whether a man has taken much or little, and whether he has taken it in a way punishable by human law, or in an ungodly manner which yet is not punishable by human law. The first condition of repentance is restitution, and no man can draw near to God until he repent him of his sin.

THE REAL HELL[1]

1 JOHN iv., 20–21: If a man say, I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar: for he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen? And this commandment have we from him, That he who loveth God love his brother also.

THE foundation principle of Christianity is love. But this love is a very practical thing. It is by no means a comfortable sense that all is well, the sense of satisfaction with oneself because one is well fed and well clothed and well housed and successful in what one undertakes, and in pleasant relations with those of one's household and the immediate friends with whom one associates. Love is a deeper and much more exacting

[1] This sermon was preached on Trinity Sunday, 1906, immediately after the publication of the government report on the packing industry. Hence the illustration is drawn from the conditions then prevailing in that industry. That in principle those conditions were not altogether exceptional is shown by the more recent exposures by trained investigators of the condition of the labourers in the steel mills in and about Pittsburg—twelve hours labour, seven days in the week, for an inadequate living wage—and the outbreak at McKee's Rocks caused by such conditions; or by the government exposure of the very contemptible thievery practised by the so-called Sugar Trust. In another direction conditions in the baking industry, as shown by investigations made in New York City

thing than this. Love is something that stirs one's being, not with contentment and satisfaction, but with yearning and desire. But love is not merely a yearning after God, which makes men turn aside from and abandon the ordinary relations of life, their family, their friends, their fellow-men, and seek solitary communion with God, an enrapt contemplation of Him. There is a very big element of selfishness and self-seeking in such love as that. Love expresses itself first of all in its relation toward those about us, the members of our family, the persons whom we employ or who employ us, our fellow-employees, those of whom we buy or to whom we sell, the people whom we meet in our ordinary social intercourse, in whose houses we visit, with whom we sit down to meals, with whom we make merry and dance and have a good time. Love shows itself in consideration for these people, for their feelings, for their rights; in treating them as we would be treated by them; it shows itself when in our dealings with them we seek not our own, not how we may be profited by them, but

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at various times within recent years, occasioned by strikes of employees, furnish another example of the same general truths here illustrated by the conditions in the packing industries in 1906. Many other cases might be cited in other trades and industries. The packers are merely an instance. While the investigation of the packing industry and the iniquities there disclosed are now over three years old, and therefore—so rapidly do we forget yesterday and pass on to the morrow—a thing of the past, it has seemed best to retain this sermon in practically its original form, rather than to seek to substitute illustrations or applications drawn from more recent exposures in other industries, to some of which, however, attention has been briefly called in foot-notes.

how we may profit them. Is there any other possible way of loving a person except to regard him in such a manner and treat him in such a manner?

Nor is the love spoken of by St. John love toward one person only, great and valuable as that may be, but loving-kindness, that yearning spirit of love which takes possession of our nature and compels from us loving dealing with all with whom we come in contact. To possess that spirit of love is to be united with God, to know God; and, on the other hand, he who does not have that spirit of love cannot know God. The test of our knowledge of God and our love for Him lies in our relations toward those about us. We use certain expressions of faith; we have our creeds and doctrines. To-day we celebrate the doctrine of the Trinity. But true faith does not consist in the recitation of or belief in the articles of the Creed; it does not consist in a true understanding and holding of the doctrine of the Trinity. Those are the externals. True faith is expressed in the life of love. Therefore the true test of the Christian Church, as of the individual Christian, is the expression of love in our relations to our fellow-men.

You have all been, I doubt not, profoundly startled within the last few days by the report made by the government inspectors on the beef-packing industry in the city of Chicago. Those of you who read the report in full found it, I doubt not, revolting and offensive to the last degree. I am not going to dwell on the details of that report or its revolting aspects; I wish you to consider certain conditions there revealed from the stand-point of the Christian religion. The things told in that report happened and are happening in the country

which, I suppose, you and I would claim to be the most advanced and the most Christian country in the world. They happened and are happening in one of the largest cities in that country, singularly progressive in many particulars, with a great university, a magnificent public school system, great numbers of churches; in a city which has all the marks of that Christian civilisation of which we boast. The heads of these great packing establishments are, I believe, all of them, at least nominally Christians, any one of whom would feel aggrieved if it were said of him, "That man is a disbeliever in the fundamental ethics of Christianity." These men have made enormous wealth out of the industry in which they are concerned. Some of them have given money for educational, benevolent, and religious purposes. They are all, I believe, received in the Christian society of the city to which they belong and in other cities in which they at times reside. They are not, at all events, outcasts from society. They are or have been courted and respected by the Christian men and women of the land, by ministers of the Gospel, by presidents and directors of benevolent and educational institutions.

Now what are the conditions of the industries which these men direct and own and of the employees whom they employ? One condition revealed is this: these men seem to have regarded their employees as so many cattle; or perhaps it is safer to say that they did not even regard them as cattle, but as so many pieces of machinery, so much wood and stone and metal out of which they were to derive as much profit as they could. It is a well-known fact that unhealthy and uncleanly conditions of places in which men and women work

produce disease, both physical and moral. Lung diseases are perhaps the most fatal of all diseases among adult workers. Consumption and pneumonia are to-day a veritable scourge to the land. We know that these are entirely preventable diseases, diseases due to infection, the result of bad sanitary conditions in the home and workshop. Any of you who have seen the ravages of consumption in the families of workers, or perhaps in your own family, know the horror of it all: the long battle for life (with the pathetic hopefulness of the man or woman who is daily and hourly growing weaker); the increasing inability to earn, the increasing expenses which the decreased earnings cannot meet, the added burden on the other members of the family; the infection that spreads to another and another; if it be the wage-earner whose life is ebbing away, the pinch of need that comes upon the whole house; then perhaps a mother with little children left to struggle on unaided; and those little children growing up with weakened constitutions as the result of the diseased condition of the home in which they were born or of their first few years of improper nourishment, due to the pinched condition of the home. Whatever the details, there is always a long-drawn-out trail of misery spreading in every direction. Whoever has seen and felt it cannot but realise the horrible cruelty of men who, for the sake of getting a larger income out of their business, will compel or allow other men and women to work under conditions which propagate and foster such disease.

Now it is precisely these conditions which, according to the testimony of the inspectors, exist in those packing houses in Chicago. There is no question but that the

business has been enormously profitable. The owners have made vast fortunes out of it. It is not, therefore, lack of means, such as you sometimes find in some skimped and profitless business, which has prevented these men from giving their employees working conditions which would not endanger their physical well-being.

Viewed from this aspect only, the whole thing is an example of utterly heartless greed. What love of their brothers who work for them is shown in such dealings? And if "a man love not his brother, whom he hath seen, how can he love God, whom he hath not seen?" Surely if such men say "I love God," they have made themselves liars, for they hate their brothers; or at least that is the effect of such an attitude toward them.

But not only does the treatment accorded by these men to their employees endanger their physical health, it endangers their soul health also. Some of you know the horror of the curse of drink. Because of the awful results of drink, Christian men and women in the churches have above everything else directed their efforts against this evil. The pulpits of our churches ring with denunciations of the liquor-dealers. Every clergyman and the great bulk of the men and women who occupy the pews are ready to welcome any denunciation of saloons and to support any organisation which attacks the liquor bars. The evil of drink will never be remedied until the things that lie behind it have been remedied. If you make men and women work in unsanitary and beastly conditions, you compel them to seek a stimulus which will at least seem to neutralise the effects of that atmosphere and those surroundings

upon them, and the stimulus which they can best and most cheaply obtain and which works most speedily is drink. If you make men and women work in such surroundings, you so degrade their appetites and desires as to leave nothing but the lowest physical passions and appetites still active. You make them beasts and they will live like beasts. It is precisely this sort of thing which these men have been doing, according to the statements of this report, with their employees.[1]

Again the very centre of home life is the woman. If you would have a home you must conserve the purity of the woman, and if you would conserve her purity you must preserve her modesty. No one who has any esteem for woman, who loves his mother or his wife or his daughter or his sister, can read the description contained in that report of the conditions under which the women employed in these works have lived, compelled thereto by the necessity of earning their daily bread, without feeling his blood boil at the revolting inhumanity, the degrading and cynical immorality of the men responsible for it, who have made out of the degradation of the men and women in their employ millions of dollars.

But not only have the packers, according to the report presented, treated those employed by them in this heartless and cruel manner: they have sold to the public products prepared in a revolting manner, and, according to the best testimony available, in some cases certainly

[1] Recent investigations in Pittsburg show that the unnatural and brutalising conditions existing in the steel industry there have similarly generated and fostered drunkenness and immorality.

dangerous to health. There has been on their part the same utter disregard of any moral element in their relation to the people to whom they sold as there has been in their relation to the men they employed. Provided they could obtain a profit, it appears to have been a matter of indifference to them what befell the people who purchased of them.[1]

It is not always easy to trace sickness and disease to their original source, but the advance of medical science has convinced us all of this: that uncleanness in the preparation of food products is a fruitful source of disease. The men who utilise diseased animals for food products, or so prepare those products that filthy and germ-containing material is mingled with them must inevitably breed and increase disease. What the packers have done is, from the moral stand-point, no worse presumably than what a great many other individuals have done,[2] but the colossal proportions which it has assumed make it a national danger and exalt the men who have been guilty of greed on a scale so enormous to the proportions of colossi of crime.

But, it will be said, these men deny that such conditions exist. That is true. Unfortunately, their denial has little value. In view of the way in which these investigations have been made, the American public ought to and probably will pay little attention to the protests of the self-interested packers.

[1] Compare conditions in food products in general, and in patent medicines and drug preparations, which have led to our recent pure food legislation.

[2] Compare the baking industry in New York City, and presumably in some other cities also.

And here, it may be added, we see an unfortunate result, not only of recent exposures of evil-doing, but also of the attitude taken both by the men who have been exposed and also by others associated with them from whom the public had supposed it could expect something better. When evil-doing was charged in insurance companies, in railroads and the like, the presidents and directors of those corporations, men whose names up to that time had carried great weight with the public, declared, first in open letters and statements and then finally on the stand before investigating committees, that there was nothing wrong; that these attacks were gotten up by interested parties; that everything was as it should be. The results of investigation have shown that those men were uttering falsehoods and the same men, when pressed hard on the witness stand, deliberately perjured themselves, declaring that they had forgotten or did not know that which every sane man knew that they knew. The result has been that the public at large has lost confidence. It believes that such men will lie to protect not only themselves, but those with whom they have been associated or the financial interests with which they are connected; and having this belief it comes to suspect that every large financial concern is corrupt and engages in dishonourable methods and that it differs from those which have been exposed only through the good fortune or good management which has enabled it up to the present time to escape detection. I say this is one of the unfortunate conditions resulting from the dishonesty exhibited by the men to whom the public had looked for something better, and which has so shaken public confidence that

all railroad presidents and officials, officers of great trust companies, indeed financiers in general are popularly regarded as criminals who should not be believed on oath except as their testimony is supported by facts proven through the evidence of others. It is a horrible thing to have been thus guilty of destroying faith in the honesty of one's fellow-men.

But to return to my theme, for I wish to follow this matter of the moral responsibility of the packers and the evil done by them. There are not only men, but women also, who are living in luxury on the proceeds of these packing industries—women, delicate, refined, and cultured, who attend church and are communicants there, who join organisations for missionary effort and contribute to them money which is oftentimes the soul-blood of other women and of little children. How do these women reconcile themselves to their part in the matter? Do they feel no responsibility for the men and women employed under such conditions, for the filth and the horrors of these packing houses? I suppose that, to a very large extent, they are in ignorance of the whole matter. They simply do not know—and do not care what is going on. Well-meaning, kindly towards those in their own circle, towards the poor and needy with whom they come immediately in contact, responding generously to appeals for sympathy and contributions for missionary and benevolent work, their responsibility for the workers through whom their money is made, for the customers buying products from which that money is derived, never enters their head. Provided the money comes, they are quite content. And this is not merely a blind trust in their fathers and husbands

and brothers, as honest and good. If it were that and that only there might be much excuse; but it means, unfortunately, much more. It means a lack of that earnest sense of responsibility for the well-being of one's fellows, which is an essential part of brotherly love, and therefore which is an essential part of Christianity. These women are like the princess of France, who, when told of the starving multitudes in Paris, at her very doors, who had no bread, asked, quite innocently, "Then why don't they eat cake?" The old prophets judged the women who lived in luxury at the expense of the suffering of others equally guilty with the men who did the immediate oppression. The fundamental evil in both cases is selfishness. They live primarily for themselves, and if they are well clothed and well fed and have a pleasant house and pleasant surroundings, then their responsibility is ended. Here are the words which the prophet Amos addressed to the rich and noble women of Samaria—his condemnation of them for what is in principle the same thing that these women are doing:

Hear this word, ye kine of Bashan,
Who are in Samaria's mount,
Who oppress the poor,
Who crush the needy,
Who say to their lords,
"Bring that we may drink":
The Lord hath sworn by His holiness
That, behold, days come upon you,
When they shall lift you with hooks,
The remnant of you with fish-hooks,
And at breaches shall ye go out, each for herself,
And to Armenia shall ye be hurled: saith the Lord.

And in a similar vein Isaiah denounces the rich women of Jerusalem, holding them responsible equally with their husbands for the suffering and misery on which their luxury was founded.

And now what further? To the men and women who are responsible for these conditions, who have lived a life of ease, trampling under foot their employees, degrading the souls of their brothers, the men and women who by their actual practice have shown that they neither know nor love God, there will come a day of reckoning, and it is the part of the Church to declare that fact in no uncertain terms. To preach love does not mean to preach an emasculated amiability which, serenely overlooking the evil, declares that all is well, all sin is forgiven, and all men shall be saved. That is no more Christian love than is the attitude of the foolish mother who is unwilling to bear the unpleasantness and the difficulties of training and correcting her child, who allows the child to be ruined because she will not suffer the pain of correcting and reproving it and training it to do right. True love is of sterner and harder fibre than this. True love involves sacrifice and pain and suffering. Love cannot exist without that, and precisely because the Church teaches love it must also teach the consequences of the lack of love. But some one may say: did not Jesus, when a poor woman, who had been taken in her sin, was brought before Him, refuse to condemn her, though the law demanded that she should be stoned, but rather advise that she should be allowed to go free? Surely He did so. The woman was a convicted and acknowledged sinner. The consequences of her sin had really

been visited upon her already. She had been condemned. And to any one who confesses his sins, who divests himself or is divested of the profits and advantages derived from that sin, who has been condemned, who sits in sack-cloth and ashes, the Church and Christian society may well show mercy and forgiveness; but never to him who does not make restitution, who is not in sack-cloth and ashes, who has not been condemned, who contrives to avoid condemnation and seeks to evade all punishment for his evil-doing. It is against precisely such persons as this that the Church must thunder out its denunciations as Christ thundered out His denunciations against the Scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites.

And what is the punishment that befalls such men? There used to be stern preaching of a hell that awaited the sinner. The real hell that awaits the man that sins is not that physical and material place of torture which our ancestors painted in such lurid colors. It is far more terrible, for its punishments and its torments are of another character.

Have you ever seen a man, honoured and admired by all about him, attaining high position in society and state, a courted and eagerly sought for guest at dinner, one on whose utterances of wit and wisdom thousands hung, revealed suddenly as a thief, a liar, and a hypocrite, a mean, contemptible, grovelling soul; and have you seen all his friends shrink from him and the men who courted and honoured him laugh or point the finger of scorn at him? Have you seen him afraid to pick up a newspaper, which used to sing his praises, for fear he shall see a cartoon holding him up to ridicule, a para-

graph making him an object of scorn and contempt; afraid to go into the clubs which were once his courts, because of the looks that he will meet, because men there will shun him? If a man shall have lived seventy years of prosperity, and then have but two years to live under such conditions as these, I think that the torture, the misery he will suffer in those two years will far more than counterbalance all the joy and pleasure he had in the seventy years. Do you realise that the after life is like that? It is suddenly to see oneself condemned before God, that is, very literally condemned by the universe; for a man to be forced to see himself as all the universe sees him, a disgusting, loathsome, contemptible thing; to stand naked and revealed in one's own sight and the sight of God, all self-respect torn away. To the man who realises what human nature is, the horrible character of the punishment which attends such misdoing is only too evident.

For all the suffering and misery a man brings here he must on his part suffer. So surely as heaven cannot be won except as a man seeks to make heaven for others, so surely as a man saves his life only by losing it, so surely is the opposite the truth. He who has sought his own life at the expense of the life of others has destroyed his own soul; and he who has founded his happiness on the suffering of others has laid up for himself a hell hereafter.

FORGIVENESS OF SINS

EPHESIANS iv., 31–32: Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice: and be ye kind one to another, tender-hearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you.

ANGER, or resentment, or wrath, is a natural characteristic or affection, and, like all natural characteristics, is useful and needful in its proper place. It is given us for a protection against injury, individually and socially, that is, as parts of a community in which each part is of necessity connected with and dependent upon every other part. It may be roughly described as passionate or brutal, and rational. Pain or injury awakens in the animal a sensation or sentiment of anger implanted in its nature for self-preservation. This anger is unreasoning, and the lower you go in the brute creation the more unreasoning you find it. It is directed equally against objects animate and inanimate and makes no distinction between intentional and unintentional injury. To this instinctive brute anger it is all one whether the pain which excites it be inflicted with good or evil intent, or utterly without any intent whatever. The general character of the sentiment of anger in very young children is

the same, sudden and unreasoning, frequently directed against inanimate objects, or against those who inflict pain for some benevolent purpose.

Now this sort of irrational, physical anger in grown people is wrong and sinful. A person of strong character who has not mastered his temper is aroused to sudden bursts of fury; a person of weak character is more apt to display his lack of self-control in the form of peevishness. But passion and peevishness are frequently attributable, not to wrong done by others, but to accidents, to our mistakes, or even to our moods. Again there is a meanness of temper often shown by passionate or peevish persons which leads them to vent that temper on wholly innocent persons, relatives or dependents, or those who cannot or will not retaliate.

One who has yielded to passion generally feels that he has done wrong. Nevertheless such a man will often excuse himself, even when to impartial spectators his anger seems wholly inexcusable, and, shifting the blame from himself, seek to lay it upon others. In the case of peevishness people are still less apt, than in the case of passion, to realise the wickedness of their conduct. While far more common than passion, it belongs rather to weaker characters, or to those which are temporarily weakened. It is a frequent concomitant of a feeble state of health. This leads both the peevish person and his friends the more readily to devise excuses for the indulgence of the vice. Instead of making a strong effort to overcome it, we encourage it in ourselves by inventing plausible excuses,—we are unwell, and it cannot be expected that we should be good-natured; or it is too hot or too cold for comfort, and when we are not comfortable

how should we be expected to keep a cheerful face and speak kindly; or the people with whom we live are thoughtless, or careless, or stupid, or uncongenial, and do not deserve or appreciate kindness. The danger is lest we convince ourselves that these excuses are true or valid, and harden temporary petulance or irritability into chronic peevishness,—a vice which renders its victims only less unhappy than its possessors.

Under the influence of passion or peevishness people are wrong-headed: it seems utterly impossible for them to see clearly where the real blame lies. This is a fact of which we are all aware; and if we have honestly and faithfully examined ourselves, our own conduct, our words and acts, and the state of mind leading to those words or acts, I think we shall have learned it from that examination. There are few indeed among us who do not sometimes yield either to passion or petulance. Things have gone wrong, we are tired, we feel out of sorts, we are busy or worried, people are stupid or vexatious, and we find a thousand and one reasons for venting our ill-nature. I do not suppose there is a person present who does not know from personal experience the state of mind to which I refer. And, looking back on the last occasion when we so acted, I hope that we make no attempt to excuse our conduct, but honestly allow that we were to blame. As soon as we have been rescued from such a mood, putting in our pockets that mean and contemptible false pride which is ashamed to confess itself wrong, we should go and own our wrong-doing to those whom we made to suffer by our passion or our petulance. To gain the self-control and the self-judgment to do this is to have made a mighty step

towards ridding ourselves of this weakness or vice of irrational anger.

Now the characteristic of the form of anger which we have thus far been treating is that it is not controlled by reason. It is physical, or perhaps rather semi-physical, and in the case of rational beings it is wrong. The second class of anger, wrath, or resentment is rational or deliberate anger. Just as irrational or brutal anger has a physical basis, so has rational anger an intellectual or moral basis, and is therefore almost peculiar to man, being shared only in a very inferior degree by some of the more highly developed animals. Rational or deliberate anger is intended in the providence of God's nature to be a protection to us against moral evil, just as irrational anger is designed to be a preventive against physical evil. This rational or deliberate anger, wrath, or resentment, is sometimes right and sometimes wrong. If you read the account of some villainy you are, or ought to be, indignant. Certain characters in history are odious to all right-thinking men on account of their crimes. Reading a story, we oftentimes work ourselves into a state of indignation against the villain of the story. We hear of bribery in our legislatures, or municipal councils, or in the elections to public office, and every honest man among us is indignant at the crime committed, and anxious to see both bribed and briber severely punished. These are cases where the feeling of indignation or anger is right and laudable, and these will illustrate what I mean by the moral basis of deliberate or rational anger, as also my statement that this anger is intended by nature as a protection both to the individual and to society against moral evil. It is this which

guides us in forming a dislike to and assuming an attitude of opposition toward the wicked.

But, as I have said, rational or deliberate anger is not necessarily right. If a person has made choice of moral evil instead of good, then his dislikes, that is, his anger, may be directed against the good instead of against the evil. Or a man may have made part choice of evil, and guided by selfishness in some form he will then, in certain instances or directions, conceive dislike or anger toward the good. Furthermore, the boundary between irrational and rational anger is not always well-defined, so that a dislike, a deliberate anger toward some class or individual, may be the ultimate result of what was at first mere physical passion or peevishness.

In general, we may say, deliberate, rational or moral anger should be directed against evil rather than against the evil-doer. Society for its own protection may be obliged to direct its anger against the evil-doers, to punish or destroy them, as a means of extirpating the hated evil. But, as individuals, even our right and proper anger against the evil never absolves us from our duty of love and helpfulness towards every individual, good or bad.

And now let us consider more directly our relations toward those whom we regard as evil-doers against ourselves. In the nature of the case, in matters which concern us or ours, we are not impartial judges, and should therefore be the more careful how we take offence. It is manifest, when we consider the case of others, that misinterpretation lies at the bottom of very many quarrels. This creates a presumption that in our own case we also misinterpret the actions of others towards our-

selves. We do not judge others by the lenient standards we commonly apply to ourselves. Unwilling ourselves to assume the blame for our failures or misfortunes, in hasty anger or deliberate resentment we attribute our own faults to others and vent on them the indignation which should of right be directed against ourselves. Just as when a child, through carelessness, falls and hurts itself its wrath is directed against the naughty stick or stone, or whatever else has been the cause of its pain, or against the innocent boy or girl, or whosoever placed the unfortunate obstacle in that position; so we, when our ignorance or carelessness has brought some harm upon us, build thereon a quarrel with some innocent, or, at the most, heedless person, whom we persist in regarding as the cause of our injury. Nothing can be more pernicious to our own character than to turn our resentment for our failures and shortcomings against others instead of against ourselves. It makes us morbid, dries up every fountain of love in our nature, and paralyses our whole moral system.

Ill-health, bad weather, fatigue, petty misfortunes and unpleasantnesses affecting our feelings may determine, as I have already said, our treatment of those about us, being visited on them as the guilty parties. This ultimately leads to quarrels in which we regard ourselves as the aggrieved and innocent party. Again, envy, commonly not acknowledged, of the position, friendships, natural endowments, advantages, successes of others leads us, ourselves not so successful, or so gifted, or so beautiful, or so popular, to misjudge and backbite. The result is that we ultimately win the hatred of those whose only sin against us was the possession of

that which we desired, and having, by our own conduct, made them hate us, we accuse them of having picked the quarrel with us.

All this is simple common sense. To assure ourselves of its truth in our own case, we have merely to apply to ourselves the same standard which we apply to those about us. Regard yourself, not as an exception to rule, but as an average human being, and this must become manifest to your reason. We say of others that a quarrel is impossible without two persons, and we recognise the fact that every story has two sides to it. But what is true of our neighbours is equally true of you and me: and, if we are unable to get along peaceably with those about us, it is almost absolutely certain that part of the fault lies with ourselves.—perhaps, indeed, we are the most to blame. At the least, common sense should show us that we are not impartial judges in the matter, and that, as we are certainly in some part to blame, we should make great allowances for the conduct of the other party; and, if matters have come to an open breach, will do well to waive what we conceive to be our rights, and take steps toward a restoration of amicable relations.

But besides all this, there is doubtless evil done to us, people do sin against us. Now, the philosophy of common sense shows us, or should show us, two things. In the first place it shows us that their sin against us is less than we count it to be, and that, perhaps, we are not ourselves entirely without blame. In the second place, a study of human nature shows us that this sentiment of anger or resentment is implanted in us for a defence against injury, and that indulgence in that sentiment in

the form of retaliation is not admissible. For, leaving out of view the partiality with which we necessarily perceive those things which concern ourselves, and which would therefore cause us to retaliate in a manner out of all proportion to the original injury, the inevitable result of retaliation is to increase injury by awakening or fostering hatred and ill-will, which will again be vented in injury.

Hitherto I have treated the subject of anger from the point of view of an entirely unemotional and finite rationality. But the highest philosophy of the human must take into consideration not merely the rational, but also the sentimental element in man; and not merely the relation of man to the finite, but also to the infinite. The highest and most perfect philosophy of human life in existence is that which was set forth in the teaching and in the life of Jesus of Nazareth.

We speak of ourselves as having sinned against God and of God as having forgiven our sins. We speak also of the wrath of God, and pray Him to avert that wrath from us. But I am afraid that a false conception of the nature and occasion of God's wrath is very prevalent, which regards God as personally angry, if I may so speak. We pray to God as though He were a human being vexed by a personal affront, whom we are seeking to propitiate. But if we understand aright what God's wrath really is, our need of redemption from sin becomes more apparent, and the method of its execution both more intelligible and more glorious. Sin is a contradiction of our nature; it prevents the individual from attaining the full proportion and harmony of his being; it entails sorrow and suffering upon the race. In our

poor human language we say that God is angry when we contradict the law of nature, the nature that is within us, or the nature that is without us, thus bringing upon ourselves or others sorrow and suffering. All suffering is the result of the violation of God's law in the physical or moral universe; it is the result of ignorance or sin.

Now Jesus of Nazareth was God incarnate in man, perfect man, without ignorance or sin, and therefore possessed of a power to overcome in others the results of sin and ignorance, namely, suffering and death. Rightly understood, His miracles seem to me to be not only miracles, but parables also. He revealed the Father to us, making manifest to man the actions of God our Father. For God our Father loves His children and is continually showing them His love and mercy. And that we might the better understand what we must do, He sent us His Son, the Christ, incarnate as son of man in Jesus of Nazareth, and allowed Him to work before our eyes manifestly the works which He himself doeth. One of the best explanations of the meaning of Christ's miracles, and His exposition of the relation of sin and suffering, is to be found in the story of the palsied man, who was brought and laid at Jesus' feet. Jesus said to him: "Son, be of good cheer, thy sins be forgiven thee." The Scribes were of the opinion that He blasphemed in claiming to forgive sins, which was a divine prerogative. The palsied man still lay sick on his bed before Him. Jesus turned to the Pharisees and asked whether it were easier to say, "Thy sins be forgiven thee," or to say, "Arise and walk." Then He turned to the palsied man and said: "Arise, take up thy bed and go unto thine house." Then the palsied man was healed, and arose

and departed to his house. This miracle, treating as it does the healing of physical infirmity as a necessary result of the forgiveness of sin, so that it is all one whether the Saviour say, "Thy sins be forgiven thee," or "Arise and walk," does then distinctly set before us the fact that suffering is the result of sin.

We must not, however, leap to the conclusion that it was the man's own sin, or even the sin of his parents for which he was suffering, as Jesus taught upon another occasion. Suffering is the result of sin in the world, but the sufferings of an individual are not necessarily the punishment of that individual, or of any individuals whom we can determine. If we can remove sin from the world we shall remove suffering. This thought appears in the visions of the old prophets, when they told of Messiah's kingdom. In that kingdom all should be love, the lion and the lamb lying down together, the bear giving up his violence and eating hay like an ox, the little child playing unharmed with venomous serpents, none hurting or destroying in all the holy mount. The miracles of Jesus are parables of the way mankind shall reach that paradise,—by putting away sin. It is not that forgiveness of sins means for us as individuals that we shall not suffer here on earth physical ills. For us as individuals the removal of these ills belongs to the hereafter. But for the race man the removal of ignorance and sin means the attainment of perfection, the removal of suffering and sorrow. The miracle of the healing of the palsied man, whose restoration to physical health followed the removal of his sins, is a parable of the result to mankind of this removal of sin.

But Jesus distinctly states that He healed the palsied

man, after removing his sins, as a proof that the Son of man hath power on earth to forgive sins. He did it, that is, in His capacity, not of Son of God, but of Son of man. He did it by virtue of that nature which He shared with us, and in order to show us what we also may do.

We have retained an ancient rite in the Church by which all members are ordained priests of God. The Bishop, in confirmation, by laying on of hands, ordains each child of the Church a priest of God, whose duty and privilege it is to forgive sins, even as Christ, our great high-priest, forgave sins. Every time you and I forgive sins we are following the example of our Master and exemplar, Jesus the Christ; we are removing some sorrow and suffering from the world. We may not say to a palsied man "Arise and walk"; but if we will say in word and deed to any who have wronged us, "Thy sins be forgiven thee," we are helping to heal of its sickness mankind, palsied with sorrow, and toil, and pain. Each sin against yourself which you forgive is pain and misery removed from some one that comes after you. Each sin to which you refuse forgiveness is more misery for those that follow, if not for ourselves. Jesus the Christ revealed to man the deeds of His Father; so, also, we, when we forgive, reveal to men our Father in heaven, the God of love and mercy. As Jesus by His miracles of sin forgiven and sickness healed showed forth God unto men, so that they knew Him, and came to Him and were saved; so we, when we forgive sins, show forth God unto men, and bring them to a knowledge of Him that they may be saved.

And one word more. We who accuse others of sin

are ourselves sinful. As we would be forgiven, so must we forgive. On this condition we have free forgiveness from Him against whom we have sinned. God sent His Son, Jesus Christ, to live and die for us, and by this life and death to breathe into the world the principle of love, that charity which is better than all gifts, which abideth still in heaven when all else has passed away. The example of His great mercy and goodness, of His love and forgiveness, are meant to win us to the endeavour to live a life like His, setting love above all things, renouncing ourselves and our selfishness, forgetting our own rights and wrongs, and forgiving and forgetting as we hope that our sins may be forgiven and forgotten. Who strives to lead this life, he it is whose sins are completely and for ever washed away in the blood of the Lamb.

RITES AND SACRAMENTS

Acts viii., 17: Then laid they their hands on them, and they received the Holy Ghost.

THE value of right forms and of right doctrines must not be minimised. They have their place, and that a place of great value in the Christian life. But it must always be recognised that forms and doctrines are the means by which we seek to attain something else, and that something else is character. When we say that we preach Christ and Him crucified, we mean that we hold up the doctrines of Jesus' life to men as the life which they should live; His sacrifice as the ideal toward which we strive, the readiness to sacrifice ourselves for the good of the world, for the uplift of those about us. We are all agreed that if we were on a sinking ship, our part, the manly part, the noble part, would be not to seek to save ourselves, but first of all to endeavour to save the weakest on that ship, the children and the women, sacrificing, if need be, our lives in the effort. Even if we should not, when tested, live up to that ideal, it is, nevertheless, our ideal of the life that is worth living. It were better to give up one's life in such a case, thereby saving others, or even only trying to save others, than to save ourselves and let them perish, for the life thus saved would not be worth having. Precisely that ideal

Christ holds up to us for our daily life. In that spirit He lived among men and died; and we say that that is the noble life, the life worth living, which, in all its acts, not merely in one great crisis, but day by day, is lived with that principle, that idea. That happiness is not worth having which is won for one's self at the expense of the misery and suffering of others; nor the health, the wealth, the opportunities which are achieved for one's self, forgetful of the poverty of others, regardless of the sufferings of others, without an effort to make our opportunity the opportunity of others.

To the despondent, to the fallen we preach Christ and Him crucified, as a manifestation of the infinite love and pity of God; that God so loved precisely those who are weak, who cannot stand upright, who mourn and are distressed, that He gave His Son for them. He has poured out His own life blood, as it were, in sympathy with their sufferings, to save and bring them to Himself. We preach to them salvation in Christ, because Christ is the exhibition of the infinite love of God, the outstretching of the arms of a Heavenly Father, the yearning of a heart more tender even than a mother's for its offspring.

But while the great effort of Christianity is thus to form character, to uplift and upbuild the weak and ignorant, to inspire all alike with the divine spirit of love, the spirit of service and of sacrifice, it should also be recognised that for the very purpose of achieving these results there must be some sort of organisation, some sort of belief, some sort of forms by which Christian men are bound together and by which they may express themselves to themselves and to one another. The form,

then, while not the essential thing, becomes a thing of great importance; and so it was that from the outset the Christian Church adopted certain forms which became both the marks to distinguish and the bonds to unite Christians. The entrance of the Christian into the Christian life was effected outwardly through Baptism. The particular symbol chosen was the symbol of cleansing, of refreshment and of new life. As the weary traveller on those dusty sun-beaten roads of the East reaches the rare stream and, plunging beneath its waters, washes off the stains of travel and finds refreshment in its cooling flood, emerging new-born, clean, fresh, with renewed strength and courage; so the Christian was dipped in the waters of Baptism to symbolise and, in a manner, to effect the putting off the stains and sins of the life that had been, dying to which he was to rise again, fresh and strong, born into a new life, the life of Christ.

To the early Christian, living in a world corrupt, bestial, and selfish, Baptism, the sign of the acceptance of the life of Christ, meant in a very peculiar sense salvation. The division between the world and the Christian was a division in the whole aim and conception of life, a division between the life of sense and the life of spirit; and every one who accepted the higher spiritual idea of the life to be lived, of the character to be sought, of necessity entered the Christian Church and was baptised—baptised at the risk of death, of social ostracism, of financial ruin, of domestic unhappiness, of continued petty annoyance and persecution his life through. Baptism meant, in very truth, to take up the cross of Christ, to live a life

of sacrifice; and so it was that the Christian Church emphasised the distinction between the Christian and the world in that assertion, with which we are all familiar, of the damnation of him who is not baptised. It is an expression of the truth that salvation lies only in the development of a character patterned after the character of God, in the development of the divine life in the man, in the aspiration after a divine ideal of love and sacrifice. The outward and the inward were so connected in fact in those early days that that might literally be said which, when said to-day, gives us a shock, because to-day we find, outside of the pale of the Christian Church, many men living a Christlike life.

Another sacrament there was which, in its outward form, appealed to and explained itself to every man of the olden time, Jew and heathen alike—the Sacrament of the Eucharist, the Holy Communion. While Baptism was the sacrament of initiation, the birth once for all into the Church of Christ and the life of Christ, the Eucharist, the Holy Communion, was a constantly recurring sacrament; the recognition of the need in spiritual life of precisely that which we find necessary in the bodily life, a continual strengthening and refreshing. Following the old sacrificial rites and customs in use among all nations from, one might almost say, the beginning of the world, the daily food of man was taken as the sacrificial element. In and by that which he used constantly, by a special consecration of it for a special purpose, he was to receive divine life, to become a sharer in that life which even the rudest men have recognised as existing, yes, and existing within themselves, so that they have counted themselves as in some

way of kin to God. He was to receive God and feast with God and in that feast to be united in a special bond of brotherhood with those who partook of the divine food with him. First the initiation, then the constantly recurring brotherhood feast, asserting and effecting a firm tie of communion of Christians one with another, and an individual and a common participation in the divine life, for the continual strengthening and refreshing of that divine element which we recognise as at least latent in ourselves, and by which we are akin to God our Father.

It is very simple, and the democracy of it is both very beautiful and very uplifting. A simplicity and democracy which choose every-day things, which all may take and have, and in doing so sanctify the every-day life, the every-day actions of man, giving to his daily life and his daily needs a spiritual significance and symbolism. Connected with that Holy Communion, by its very relation to the death of Jesus, was also a further sacrificial thought, which, as I have said, is fundamental in Christianity—the conception of service and self-sacrifice. However the outward form of this sacrament has been changed, whatever alien element may have crept in at any place or any time among its rites and its doctrines, the sacrament of the Body and Blood of Christ does inevitably hold up to men as the very centre of the Christian faith and the Christian life the sacrifice of Christ, and therefore has been a moulding power in the life and character of Christians through all the ages and must continue to be so. For the control of our lives, the formation of our characters, we depend not merely on pure reason; we are affected by what we see and feel and

hear, by our imaginations and our emotions, by our environment, by our acts and our customs. The sense life is an essential part of our being and this sacrament has, I will venture to say, by its constant visible, and, as it were, tangible testimony to the meaning of Christianity, been vastly more powerful in the formation of Christian character and the development of Christian civilisation than all the sermons that the best preachers have ever preached.

Other rites and ceremonies have been regarded more or less in the Christian Church as having sacramental value (Roman Catholics, for example, speak of seven sacraments); but, whatever value these other rites and ceremonies may have, the Christian Church as a whole has never placed them on the same footing as these two sacraments, Baptism and the Supper of the Lord, which were instituted by our Master himself.

From the outset in the Christian Church, as a necessary corollary to the belief in the solidarity of parent and child and the responsibility of parent for child, the children of believers were baptised. In all common sense it should be so. The greatest influence on the life of a child is the life and belief of its parents. Under normal conditions the child accepts what the parent accepts, and if the parent's conception of life be the Christian conception of a life of service and sacrifice, the child is as likely to inherit that from the parent as it is to inherit the parent's peculiarities of form and figure, of colouring and of temperament; and by inheritance I mean here not only that which comes with parentage proper, but that which comes with the rearing of the child by the parents, the association, the environment of the family

and home life. It was, therefore, simply common sense that the parent who had brought a child into the world should conceive that it was his duty to bring that child into the Church and present it for baptism as a Christian, with no more question as to its religious than he would have as to its physical parentage. But because children were thus admitted into the Church, there came also the necessity of providing some means by which the child, arrived at years of discretion, should itself make profession of its aim in life, consecrating itself to the Christian service.

I have chosen for my text a passage which may show you how early in the Christian Church the rite of Confirmation was practised. Here we are told of the confirmation by the Apostles of those who had already been baptised at Samaria by others. Those who had been baptised and brought into the Christian Church were adults. They had been baptised by what you may call local ministers. The heads of the Church from Jerusalem were then sent for, a recognition, you will observe, of the solidarity of the Church, of a great Christian organisation. These heads of the Church, the Apostles, laid their hands upon the heads of these newly baptised persons and prayed to God that He would give them His Holy Spirit. They set them apart from the world as consecrated to the service of Christ, and prayed that they might be indued with the Spirit of God to strengthen them in that service. This laying on of hands was an ancient custom in religious life. It was the means by which, in Jewish use, persons were set apart for some special service or ministry. The Christians took over the custom. They laid their hands

on the head of him who was to be consecrated for any given work and prayed God that His Holy Spirit might be given to this, His servant, to enable him to do that work faithfully and with power. When they sent out missionaries, as, for example, Paul and Barnabas, they laid their hands on their heads and consecrated them for their mission work. When they introduced in the early Church deacons to minister and to serve among the needy, they laid their hands on the heads of those who were thus to serve, and prayed to God to give them His Holy Spirit to enable them faithfully and effectively to perform their work.

And the same plan was pursued with the Church at large. In the conception of the Christian Church every member is a priest, in the sense in which Jesus Christ was a priest. It is his part to offer a sacrifice, and that sacrifice is himself. In our own Church, when we come to receive the Communion we say: "Here we offer unto Thee ourselves, our souls and bodies, to be a reasonable, holy, and living sacrifice unto Thee." The laying on of hands meant the consecration of each Christian believer into that universal priesthood of the Church. He who was baptised in infancy, born into, initiated into the Christian Church, at the age of discretion came and openly made his confession of his faith, his declaration of his intention to try to live the life of Christ, and then the hands of one of the heads of the Church, an apostle or a bishop, were laid upon his head to consecrate him to that service.

That is what Confirmation means. In present conditions there are numerous Christian bodies—the greater part of the Protestant churches about us—who have not

retained this ancient rite of Confirmation. A part of it they have in some cases retained, the individual side, the declaration of his faith openly before the congregation by him who had been baptised as an infant. They have not retained that part of the ceremony which indicates the consecration of the individual by the Church at large, the whole Body of Christ through its representative or head, the Bishop, thus binding all together in one great organisation. But inasmuch as we count Baptism and the Supper of the Lord as standing on a different footing from all other rites and ordinances in the Christian Church, and inasmuch as these are accepted and used in their entirety by these Protestant churches, it is not our practice to insist upon the Confirmation of those who have already by profession become communicants in other Christian churches. In this we are Catholic. We recognise the great communion of Christian believers in Christ, and however much we value those ancient rites which have come down to us from the earliest days of the Church, we will not let them stand before those things which the Church of all times has counted the nearest approach to essentials that any forms can be—namely, the sacraments of Baptism and Holy Communion. Hence we receive gladly as communicants all members of the Church, all baptised persons who come to us as communicants from other religious organisations; but to those who grow up as children in the Church, or who come to us not having already made profession of their faith and become communicants elsewhere Confirmation is the door of entrance to the full privileges and the full duties of the Christian.

It is, as I have set forth, an ancient, a very ancient rite, practised by the Apostles. It is the declaration of the personal acceptance by the Christian of his obligation as a Christian to try to live the life of Christ, to accept as the ideal of his life the life of service and sacrifice. It is also a recognition of his own weakness and his need of divine strength to do this. Confirmation is further a recognition of the fact that no man may live his life to himself; that there is a great community of which he is but a part, of which even the parish in which he makes his profession of faith is but a part; so that for the purpose of Confirmation it is not the priest of the parish but the Bishop of the Church who is called upon to lay his hands upon the head of the person to be confirmed. There is thus a recognition of a work which must be done by the body of Christians as a whole, in which the individual must subject his personal ideas and fancies to the will and wishes and needs of others. He is taught that his religion is not merely an individual but also a social obligation.

PRIESTS AND PROPHETS

ISAIAH lxi., 1, 2: The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me; because the Lord hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek; he hath sent me to bind up the broken-hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound; to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord.

THE second portion of the Book of Isaiah contains the gospel of life and salvation to a nation sick of sin, enslaved, heart-broken. The first fifteen chapters are a carol of glad tidings, a promise of release, a prophecy of the joy and gladness which God has prepared for the people whom He has redeemed. Cyrus had overthrown the power of Babylon and set its captives free.

But, after all, not many of them went back to Jerusalem, and those who did found the greater part of the land which had belonged to their fathers occupied by the Edomites, the rest largely a wilderness, the ancient cities ruin heaps, Jerusalem a desolation. The prosperity which they had expected did not come. There was no great interference of God, so far as they could see, to bring back the captives from the ends of the world; and among the Edomites and Ammonites, the Arabians and Samaritans they were but a poor and puny folk. To these men, and from them to Israel everywhere and to

the world at large, were spoken the last eleven chapters of our book of Isaiah. The writer of the passage which I have taken as my text speaks these words of hope out of and for that poor, insignificant folk which had settled itself in the ruins of ancient Judah after the exile: "The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me"; and this is the proof that it is the Spirit of the Lord, because my message is good tidings to the poor, the weak, the miserable, because I am sent to bind up broken hearts, to preach liberty to those that are enslaved, the opening of the prison doors "to them that are bound; to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord."

When Jesus, returning to his home-town, Nazareth, was called upon by the rulers of the synagogue to conduct the services, He made these words, a part of the second lesson for that day, the text of His sermon, saying to His hearers and fellow townsmen: "This day is this scripture fulfilled in your ears." He adopted this passage as a proclamation of His own mission.

The condition of the Jews in His day was very different from their condition at the time when the old prophet wrote this passage. Galilee was rich and densely settled, as it had never been before nor has been since. Jerusalem and Judæa flourished, so far as material wealth was concerned, beyond the fondest dreams of former generations. The Jews throughout the world were, on the whole, rich and prosperous. They were the money power in the Roman Empire and in the Parthian Empire alike. In general they enjoyed religious freedom, and in Judæa and Galilee the government, so far as they themselves were concerned, was practically in their own hands. Only they did not have political independence

to establish a theocratic kingdom, and this they expected the Messiah to bring.

Jesus, who claimed to be that Messiah, takes as the expression of His mission these words, preached in and for this people when it was down-trodden, broken-hearted, enslaved. He makes no apparent effort to free them from their foreign overlords. He applies these words no longer to the Jew oppressed and enslaved by the outside heathen, but to the poor Jew, down-trodden and practically enslaved by his richer fellow Jews. Prosperous and well-to-do as the bulk of the nation was, there were among them only too many poor and needy, sick in body and sorrowing in soul. The very prosperity of the prosperous had been the means of practically enslaving and oppressing a large part of the community which did not share the opulence and the comfort of the privileged and dominant classes. Their religion, also, had become a class religion and a law religion, concerning itself primarily not with the weightier matter of love of their neighbours, but with the fulfilment of minute details of ritual and the correct expression of doctrine. Jesus became the friend and Saviour of all who were poor, down-trodden, or in any need among His people. His was a mission of love to the captives of society, to the broken-hearted who had found no joy but only misery in life, to the forgotten wretches who toiled in the prison houses of their huts and shops for the barest and most miserable subsistence, without freedom and without happiness. He preached good tidings to the unsuccessful, the unfortunate, the miserable, good tidings of hope and salvation, "the acceptable year of the Lord." He lived in and for these people, giving himself for them,

suffering with their sufferings, sorrowing with their sorrows, poor in their poverty, seeking to heal them in soul and mind and body by the out-pouring of a divine love. In preaching this gospel and living this life, He came into conflict with the orthodoxy of the religion of His day and the respectability of its society. His church and His people put Him to death as a revolutionist, as one who, in their judgment, threatened the very foundations of religion and society. To them He seemed to aim at the destruction of the social order and the perversion of the ancestral faith. In fact He strove to construct a society which should realise that idea of the kingdom of God proclaimed by the prophet of old, where there should be no broken-hearted, no prisoners, no slaves, none poor, wretched, and down-trodden. This was his conception of the acceptable year of the Lord, which could be realised only as men substituted in their dealings with one another love for law, service to the needs of others for exploitation of those needs for their own profit.

The Christian Church and especially the Christian ministry must proclaim the same message to the men of to-day. So surely as there is an anointing of the Spirit of the Lord God, it is an anointing for this same purpose: to heal the sick, to free the captives, to loose them that are bound,—to protest against those conditions of life, too often sanctioned by usage or religion, which produce this enslavement and this misery. The mission of the Church is not to those who have, who are prosperous, content, self-satisfied with their faith and with their works alike, except insofar as it addresses to them words of warning; as it bids them, in the words

of Christ, to sell all they have and give it to the poor. The mission of the Church and its ministry is a message of glad tidings to those who have not,—to those who have failed in the struggle of life, who are unfortunate, wretched, sinful— to seek to make them sharers in the joy and the happiness of life.

When the Christian Church started, it was in its general conditions like the Jewish state to which the old prophet first addressed the words of my text. There were in it none but the poor and the broken-hearted and the captives and the bondmen. In Ephesus, in Corinth, in Rome it was the religion of the slaves and the freedmen, of the widows and the poor artisans. It was the religion of the slums and of the work shops. And the one principle of this religion was love,—love toward God displayed in loving-kindness toward their fellow-men. It was the need of each appealing to the other, calling forth the best and highest in their natures, that ennobled and lifted up these poor, ignorant men until the glory of their lives filled the world with wonder. Then the higher circles of society were touched; and at last the state itself became Christian,—and then something happened like that which had happened among the Jews. Religion began to crystallise into form and dogma. The religion of a man came to be accounted of, not by the evidence in his words and acts of the Spirit of God dwelling in him, and inspiring him to live the life of Christ, but by his professions of belief and his methods of worship. The Church built splendid temples and developed a gorgeous ritual, its bishops became princes and its monks wrote theological treatises on the nature and attributes of the angels.

But through all the history of the Church, wherever men have been touched with the spirit of divine love, wherever they have sought in literal fact to live the life of Christ, wherever their hearts have throbbed in sympathy with the poor and the broken-hearted and the captive and the bondmen, there you will find a certain rebellion against these forms and these expressions of doctrine.

Mission work is apt to be wonderfully broadening in its influence upon the man who undertakes it. I have often told, because it was to me so rich in meaning, my experience with a certain Roman Catholic missionary at Madeba beyond Jordan. A man of intense zeal for the Master, a man of most self-sacrificing devotion to the Church of Christ; well-to-do in this world's goods he sold all he had and gave it to the poor. For a time he conceived that he could best serve God in that most ascetic of all monastic service in the Roman Church, the service of the Trappist monks. But this did not satisfy him. At last he went out as a missionary. When I first met him he had done great things among the wild Arabs, with whom he lived entirely alone, only seeing a white face once or twice in a year, as some curious traveller reached those outlying regions. That I might not interfere with his work by exhibiting to the people for whom he laboured the divisions in Christianity, I asked whether and how I might be partaker in the Mass. He threw his arms about my neck and told me that, however differences of doctrine and practice might separate us at home, there, in the face of the misery and need, the ignorance and degradation of that heathenism, he knew no difference between us who professed the name of Christ and His

love. He counted himself and me as true brothers and fellow-workers in Christ. The man who has entered into a real communion with Christ in his service to men must have in him something of that spirit which enabled Jesus to share with His people in religious ceremonies and religious expressions which seem to you and me to-day so strangely alien to His own teaching. He was circumcised, He was obedient to the Law, as the religion of His people, He joined in the bloody sacrifices of the temple, He used formulæ and prayers which seem to us to-day redolent of strange and foolish superstitions, because He entered into the real spirit which lay behind it all. He was one in spirit with him whosoever sought to serve God, and He was one in spirit with him whosoever had need of the love and the help of God.

Doctrines and ceremonies are not to be minimised. They have their place and their use; but they are valueless and worse than valueless unless the man who uses them feels through them and behind them the Spirit of God and His love.

There are three parts in religion. First, there is the part of authority: you accept practices and professions of faith because they are taught you by those whom you respect and reverence, because they are laid down by the Church; but so long as your religion remains on that plane and that plane only, its value is not great. Secondly, there is the part of reason: that which has been accepted on authority is questioned and examined and the effort is made to apply to it the tests of reason. It is good for men to do this, even though at times it results in the abandonment of that which has been accepted on authority; but indeed no authority which is

not in some way in tact with the reason of man can in the long run sustain its position. This questioning of authority by reason is, of course, more prevalent among the educated and the thoughtful. The thinking man, and especially the man who is thinking of preaching the Gospel, is apt to come to a stage where his thinking clashes or seems to clash with the doctrines of the Church, as they have come to him through authority. It is good for a man to come to this stage and to have to think the thing out. It is bad for a man, when he comes to this stage, if he have not previously acquired some of that spirit of obedience, that spirit of un-egotism, if I may so speak, which, with all due confidence in itself, yet respects and regards the experience and the opinion of others.

But there is also a third part in religion. The mental processes will never give satisfactory results unless a man enter also into a spiritual experience, unless he be anointed with the Spirit of God. There is a soul sense in us which is not mind. It is that by which I know you and you know me. No reasoning gives me your love or gives you my love, no reasoning shows me your soul or shows you my soul. There is a something else by which soul speaks to soul, and there is something beyond reason by which man enters into a genuine relation with God, feels the presence of God, accepts the law of love as the law of his life. That spiritual something does not supplant reason, it does not supplant authority. Authority has its place, reason has its place. But behind and above these is the Spirit, which makes religion a new and different thing, higher, deeper, broader. No one can truly preach the Gospel of Jesus Christ until

he has entered into that spiritual union with God, and been anointed with the Spirit of love to preach good tidings to the poor.

Now there have been ages when the Church as a body has seemed to be lacking in this anointing of the Spirit, and, because it was lacking in it, therefore it sought to hedge around its faith. It was timid and fearful lest men should not believe. It built up great fences of confessions of faith and articles of belief and exacted of men oaths of allegiance to all the doctrines contained in these things. And in doing so it got very far away from the spirit of Jesus Christ and the spirit and the creeds of the early Church. So, in a somewhat similar manner, as it lost the personal sense of the divine presence, it attempted to represent that presence by ever greater pomp of forms. Forms there must be, creeds there must be, so long as we are materialised in these outward bodies; for we must communicate with one another. We must find some form of words to express our common thought, certain outward acts must symbolise for all alike the inward and spiritual truth. You will remember that when, at the very beginning of the Church's organisation, Philip baptised the eunuch, there was what you may call a catechism and a creed. Philip was willing to baptise the eunuch if he believed with all his heart. This catechism of Philip the eunuch satisfied by his expression of faith in Jesus Christ as the Son of God. The real faith of the Christian is, after all, a very simple one, and it is to be guarded not so much by the development of complex forms of words as by demanding an expression of that faith in character and life. The heresies which the Church has to fear are rather heresies

of life than heresies of doctrine,—the heresies of selfishness, and worldliness, and unspirituality.

When a man feels upon him the anointing of the Spirit of God, and his heart burns with love for those who are poor and sick and enslaved,—it is not that he wants to cast away creeds, but behind them he sees and feels the greater something which they symbolise. He sees Jesus Christ, the expression of God in man. The Incarnation thrills and throbs with a new meaning; he has found the divine in man, he has found it in these poor, wretched failures of men, and it has revealed to him glorious possibilities for them also. He feels the touch of kinship with them. In proportion as a man says the Creed with this deeper faith is he apt to be more tolerant of the difference of views of other men with regard to the words of that Creed. The thing behind has become so great, so wonderful, the spiritual life has become so real that the outward and material loses part of its value. Now this may of course be carried too far. It may develop into anti-nomianism, but in general the difficulty of the Church has been not anti-nomianism but over-strictness of doctrinal interpretation.

Of these things I have spoken because, in the opinion of some, there is a mental and spiritual crisis in the Church at the present time. I think they are mistaken. There is, I believe, a spiritual awakening in the Church, and every spiritual awakening will show itself in what seem like revolutionary and even destructive movements. Just as Jesus seemed to the Jews of His own time a menace to Church and State, so any spiritual movement in its degree is apt to seem to the established authorities of Church and State revolutionary and de-

structive. It is not possible for the ordinary man, in a period of mental or spiritual movement, to foresee precisely the outcome of that movement. But you and I, who believe in God, have no right ever to be timid or fearful about the outcome of any movement. That is the part of the unbeliever, not of the believer. So far as the experience of men goes, and so far as the personal experience which I have made in my own life goes, the results of all movements which seek to give expression to reason or the spirit are in the end constructive, however mistaken their formulæ and their shibboleths may be. They do not subvert, but only enlarge and deepen the faith. Often-times such movements, themselves heretical doctrinally, bring out the inward truth which the Church has tended to lose or obscure by devoting itself too exclusively to the outward expression.

Remember always that the fundamental thing is the life, the character. The test of the reality of the belief of the Church, as of the individual, lies in that. The presence or absence of the Spirit of God in the Church is indicated by the fulfilment or lack of fulfilment of its mission—"to preach good tidings unto the poor; * * * to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound; to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord."

We have three orders in the ministry of our Church —Deacons, Priests, and Bishops. If you will stop a moment to consider the origin and the function of deacons and priests you will observe that they are symbolic of the attitude of the whole Church. The word Deacon means service. The Church found itself at the very

outset compelled to serve not alone the souls of men, but their bodies also, and when murmurings arose because the Apostles did not perform this function satisfactorily, the Apostles reserved for themselves the diaconate or ministry of the word, and assigned to seven men set apart for that purpose the diaconate or ministry of alms, the care for the bodily needs. The same word is used in the Greek for both services, but the name Deacon was applied only to those who were set apart to service for the bodily needs. (In point of fact it is impracticable to keep the bodily and the spiritual needs so dissociated, and within a very short time you find the men who were set apart to serve as deacons for the administration of alms engaged also in that other diaconate, the spiritual service or ministry.) Now, in setting aside those deacons for a diaconate or service, the Church was merely recognising its own obligation of service. No Christian man is free from that obligation of ministry, of diaconate, in his own person to those who have need; but for the organised Christian body there is necessity further of representatives who shall take the charge of that service in its larger aspects for the community as a whole. The Diaconate, therefore, is symbolic of the obligation of the Church to proclaim by deeds of love and mercy good tidings to the poor and needy.

Similarly, the Priesthood is symbolic. As the Church is the body of Christ, so it must express Him in the world. Like Him it must sacrifice, and the sacrifice which it must make is the sacrifice of itself. And as sacrifice is the function of the Church, which is the body of Christ, so it is the function of each individual member

of that Church to offer himself, his soul and body as "a reasonable, holy, and living sacrifice." As the Son of God came down from heaven and was incarnate in man that He might save man, so each follower of Christ must descend, as it were, from the heaven of his own success, his own prosperity, his own comfort, and enter into the need and the suffering and the misery of those who have not, of those who have failed, of those who are discontented, of those who are sick in body and in soul, that he may save them. He who, having talent, having place, having knowledge, having success, having prosperity, having comfort, conceives of it as a thing in which he may rest content, has failed to grasp the foundation principle of Christianity. He does not know Jesus Christ. This conception of sacrifice the Church holds continually before its members in that service which you may call the Mysteries of Christianity, the service of the Holy Communion. So holy and peculiar does it count this service that it allows only those especially prepared and trained, whose characters have undergone the closest scrutiny, to administer those mysteries. These men are in a special sense its priests, who represent in this service the congregation, and whose offering of the sacrifice of Christ is symbolic of the offering of itself in service and sacrifice by the Church. But these men are priests in the truest sense, not because they administer those outward emblems of infinite love, but because they enter into such a union with Christ that they join with Him in His sacrifice; and that also is symbolic of the Church.

But our priesthood has also another function. The earliest function of the Jewish priesthood was the

interpretation of the oracles of God, rather than the offering of sacrifice. At a later date this function was left largely to the prophets, and the priests became almost exclusively sacrificers for the people. Jesus united the two functions of the ancient priesthood once more in His own person as priest and prophet, and His followers in the official ministry of the Church, the priesthood of the Christian Church, are expected to do the same. It is their function to interpret the oracles of God.

There has been too often in the past a so-called conflict between science and the Church, which, so far as the Church was concerned, arose from the fact that some priests were not progressive, open-minded, eager to learn more about God as He reveals Himself in His universe. Going back over the ages that are past, one is reminded of the opposition which Galileo met with, the treatment of the Copernican theory, and, in more recent times, the outcry against Darwin and the theory of evolution.

It is not possible for every priest of the Church to be familiar with all fields of science, if with any. Some priests may find time to devote themselves as a mental recreation to the study of some branch of science, but whether they do so or not it does lie within the province of the priesthood to learn from specialists in scientific study the results of their work, and to breathe into those results that spiritual something which it is the peculiar province of the priesthood to give to all knowledge. Indeed, that is our work in interpreting the oracles of God, not that in the field of science we should be the explorers, but that, receiving the approved truths of

science, we should invest them with spiritual significance, making them live in the realm of God.

Now and then you hear it said that science is Godless, that science takes men away from God. In the long run science brings men to God. The great difficulty has been that misguided men, speaking with some show of authority in the name of God, have at various times opposed the study of science, or condemned the scientists for their results, as though they were responsible for the truths which they discovered. The position which a priest should take, as interpreter of the oracles of God, is that truth is divine, unfettered, unhampered. Men must be urged to search for it. All truth is of God and all truth is one truth. Whoever seeks and finds truth has found and revealed to man something more of God.

The scientific discoverer of truth sometimes so presents that truth that it seems to be antagonistic to faith. It is here that the priest must especially be the interpreter of the oracles of God; he must take that truth and put it in its proper place in connection with the faith. It is his duty to lead his people on, to expound the new discoveries that are made as new revelations of God; to find in them applications of the great principles of God's love, and mercy, and justice, and truth; and to show men that these new things are not contrary to God, but a further revelation of God to man in accordance with the eternal principles of our faith.

We shall make our faith a false faith if we do not so believe and practise. Timidity, dread of the discoveries of science, uneasiness in view of the search after truth, of God's law in nature, is an evidence of a certain lack of faith, a certain fear that in some way or another the

things which we hold may not be true. The priest who has such timidity is hampered in the most dangerous way in interpreting God to man. He is hampered by lack of faith, lack of faith in the eternal truth, of faith in the unchangeable God who cannot contradict Himself, who cannot reveal one truth at one time and another at another, of faith in the infinite God, who is all in all.

FREE CHURCH

DEUTERONOMY xvi., 16, 17: They shall not appear before the Lord empty; Every man shall give as he is able, according to the blessing of the Lord thy God which he hath given thee.

THESE words occur in the prescriptions of the Book of Deuteronomy with reference to the three great pilgrim feasts of the Jewish year, at which all Jews were ordered to visit the Temple at Jerusalem. No one was to appear before the great King of Israel empty. As it was the custom of men in coming before earthly kings to present gifts, so, when they came before the King of kings, they were to present gifts, each according to his ability, according to the blessing which God had given him.

Now, our theory of the relation of man to God is that there is no distinction of persons. God accepts rich and poor alike. The small gift of the poor man, if only it be honestly given, according to his ability, is as acceptable to Him as the manifold greater gift of the rich man. What God considers is not the gift, but its meaning to the man who makes it. He to whom belong the cattle upon a thousand hills needs no offerings of bulls and goats; what He wishes is the offering of the heart of the offerer. A true gift of love, which involves sacrifice, although utterly insignificant in intrinsic value, is vastly

more precious in the sight of God than the gift of thousands of dollars which involves no sacrifice, no forethought, no care and concern of love. Our Lord emphasised this most emphatically when His disciples called His attention to the beauty and magnificence of the Temple at Jerusalem, as something particularly acceptable to God, because it represented so much money, by pointing out a poor widow woman who was casting a couple of farthings into the treasury of the Temple, and declaring that her gift was more precious in the sight of God than the millions given by rich men and women to adorn and beautify the Temple and make glad its service, because it was her all, theirs but a small part of their all.

The same theory which we hold in regard to the relation between God and men in the matter of gifts, we hold also as to the relation of man to man in the Kingdom of God and the House of God. We declare that in the Kingdom of God factitious distinctions of wealth and rank do not exist, that what God considers is the man, so that in His Kingdom men hold their rank according to their spiritual character, the humble and lowly receiving the places of distinction, and the haughty and self-consequent the lowly places, if indeed any place at all be allotted them. The House of God we seek to make so far like the Kingdom of God, that while we do not undertake to pass judgment—which belongs only to God—upon the relative rank and worth of worshippers, we nevertheless refuse to admit worldly distinctions there. We claim that worldly position should have no weight whatsoever in Church arrangements. But from the earliest time there has been difficulty in carrying

this theory into practice. The writer of the Epistle of James complains that in his day, at the very beginnings of the Church, men allowed their spiritual ideas to become confused with their material customs, so that even in the House of God they would lead the man of means, who wore the handsome robe and the costly ring, and from whom great contributions might be expected, to the place of honour, while the man shabbily dressed, and presumably with empty purse, was placed in an inferior position, far removed from what we should call the chancel end of the church. The Christians of those days were, almost without exception, poor, and it was difficult for them to avoid being dazzled by wealth and rank.

You will find the same conditions prevailing to-day, and in the poorest congregations almost more pronouncedly than in the richest. I remember well a congregation of poor negroes in a certain New England city, where I was a student, whose attitude in this matter was a subject of constant jest. If a well dressed white man went to their service, a place of honour was at once assigned him, and even license and impropriety of conduct were overlooked, if made good by a contribution which, to those poor folk, seemed munificent. But should a poor white man enter, from whom nothing was to be expected, he was handled with rigour, and if not positively forbidden admission, yet found difficulty in obtaining any place, even the lowliest.

Churches, like everything else in this world, require some sort of material support, and we are in danger of calculating the prosperity of a church, not by the number of souls that are brought to Christ, but by the

amount of its contributions, the splendour of its edifice, the eloquence of its clergy, and the magnificence of its music and its services. Lowell, in his *Vision of Sir Launfal,* tells us that everything in this world has its price, even the graves in which we lie; only the gifts of God are priceless, His sunshine and His rain descending on all alike.

"Earth gets its price for what earth gives us;
The beggar is taxed for a corner to die in,
The priest hath his fee who comes and shrives us,
We bargain for the graves we lie in;
At the devil's booth are all things sold,
Each ounce of dross costs its ounce of gold;
For a cap and bells our lives we pay,
Bubbles we buy with a whole soul's tasking;
'T is heaven alone that is given away,
'T is only God may be had for the asking.
No price is set on the lavish summer;
June may be had by the poorest comer."

But in practice it requires money to enjoy even June, at least for the city resident. And so it comes to pass that, in spite of all our theory of the free relation of God and man, of the freedom of the Gospel and the free-will character of the gifts of man, we make religion also have its price.

For it is manifest that money must be raised to conduct religious work as for any other purpose. Our object should be, however, so to raise that money that it comes as a free-will gift, the offering of love of believers. Let those who love the Lord Jesus Christ prove their love to Him, as they prove their love to their dear ones on this earth, by their offerings of love. That is the principle inculcated by the text which I have taken from the Old

Testament Book of Deuteronomy. Let every man give as he is able, but let no one come empty into the presence of the Lord.

When, in course of time, Church and State came to be united, the Christian Church-state did precisely what the Jewish Church-state had done before it, at least in the later period of its existence, namely, it undertook to levy a tax for the maintenance of religious work. The Church undertook to support itself through the State by the same means which were employed for the maintenance of the civil establishment. The Jews in the latter period of their history had levied a per capita tax for the maintenance of the Temple worship; the Church undertook to levy similar taxes, and all through the Middle Ages and, in fact, down to the beginning of the last century, such a relation between Church and State continued to prevail, and still continues to prevail in almost every country except our own.

In this country the withdrawal of State aid forced men to fall back on the system of free-will offerings. The ideas of individual freedom and local self government, which were prevalent in State affairs, and which had been at the bottom of the whole Revolutionary movement, had already led in Church matters to a congregational development. Congregations were looked on as the unit, and it became the duty of each congregation to organise and support its own form and place of worship. This had, along with its advantages, certain disadvantages. There was a tendency toward a sort of club development. It was thought that if the matter of support were left entirely to free-will offerings, each one being told to give as he was able, some men,

who were perfectly well able to give, would give nothing, although making use of all the privileges of the Church. It seemed to people used to the ordinances of civil law and to the connection between Church and State which had existed for so long a time, that some sort of means must be found to coerce people into bearing their share of the financial burden. It was a matter that could not be left to them and God. A very simple way of preventing men from shirking seemed to be to say: "You cannot have a part in the worship and ministry of this church unless you pay your quota toward its support. There are such and such a number of us and your quota is so and so much." Where all men are equal in their means and opportunities, and all are burdened with the same obligations, this method of collecting a revenue for the support of the Church might not be unjust, and need not, in itself, exclude any from equal privileges. At the same time, even in that case, its tendency is to do away with the essential idea of a gift of love and substitute for it, under ecclesiastical law and sanctions, a tax system, making men feel that they have done their duty when they have simply paid a certain obligatory tax into the church treasury. But, in reality, men are very far from equal in means, opportunities, or obligations resting upon them, and anything like a systematic enforcement of such a system, especially in our cities, is bound to result in gross inequalities in the House of God and in the substitution of a material for a spiritual standard in the relations of men to the privileges of worship.

The pew system, which was originally introduced, I believe, with a view to keeping families together, lent

itself readily to a further development of this idea of a tax. The church became a sort of club house or a grand opera house, if I may be permitted without irreverence to use that term, whose seats or boxes were allotted to the annual subscribers according to the amount which each was able to pay. If you will go over the religious history of this city during the last century, you will find that in the thirties there were churches only for the well-to-do. Those churches were of the nature of clubs with graded sittings. There was no missionary life whatsoever in the Church. In fact, all spiritual life in our Church was at that time at a very low ebb. Not only were there no missions to the heathen, but the poor and foreign population of this city, which was rapidly increasing, was absolutely uncared for.

Some of the spiritual leaders of the day were deeply moved by these conditions, and an organisation was established to start free chapels for the poor and neglected population in this city. The movement quickly took root and spread, until it came to be looked upon as the duty of each rich church to provide a chapel with free sittings for poor people. But it was soon found that this did not solve the problem. The rich had their sittings in handsome churches with eloquent preachers and fine music. The poor were provided, at the expense of the rich, with chapels, for the most part plain and simply severe, not to say ugly, with preachers who were not considered sufficiently able to be allowed to preach in the parish church at all, and with music to match, if any music were provided.

A certain class of dependent poor were reached through these chapels, but in general, although there

were brilliant exceptions, this method proved utterly inadequate. The poor were pauperised. Their religion was given to them cheap, and they consequently valued it at naught. They did not themselves contribute to it, nor had they any voice in the management of their chapels. The rich, on the other hand, were hardened in their selfish isolation. They felt that when the chapel was built and given for services for poor people, they had done their part and might rest at ease. They regarded themselves as charitable and liberal and as having fulfilled almost to excess the law of God in giving a chapel to the poor; of deeds of personal service, of giving their hearts to these people, they had no idea. Nor did they realise the needs or character of the poor to whom they offered places in these chapels. They regarded them as ungrateful because they did not go flocking into the chapels, and as mean and un-Christian because they did not contribute to their support. There was a complete lack of sympathy and, consequently, of love and service, which must always prevail where there is isolation. We cannot understand the needs of people, spiritual or otherwise, without coming in contact with them. Some good and noble men and women went down to the chapels and laboured there in person, but in the majority of cases the establishment of the chapels resulted in a more complete separation, if that were possible, between rich and poor, since the rich felt that now there was no excuse whatsoever for the poor to come into their churches.

Then began the free church movement, started by those who realised that what was necessary was to bring rich and poor together, on a basis of equality, in

the House of God, each being called upon to contribute simply what he was able, the action of the individual being left to himself and God. There are now a considerable number of independent churches in New York which have adopted the free church system, and in the Church at large it has secured a permanent hold, so that in some dioceses no church can be consecrated or admitted to Convention unless it be free. Free churches have also exercised a remarkable influence on the pewed churches. These are no longer what they once were. There is a missionary spirit in them, and in most of them there are more or less free sittings and a readiness to welcome strangers and outsiders to the services and into the pews without regard to dress or contributions. At the same time, as long as the idea of making a charge for a sitting prevails, there must, of necessity, be distinctions between rich and poor in the House of God. The ideal state has not been reached so long as that condition exists, or the further arrangement by which the rich church and its poor chapel are kept distinct one from the other.

SABBATH-SUNDAY

St. Mark ii., 27: The sabbath was made for man, and not man for the sabbath: so that the Son of man is lord even over the sabbath.

IN the intense anxiety of the Jewish religious leaders to maintain and increase the sanctity of the Jewish people, to separate them clearly and absolutely from the heathen nations among which they lived, great emphasis was placed upon the observance of the Sabbath Day. It was guarded and protected by all sorts of rules and interpretations of the law to keep it inviolate, until it came to be felt, by many certainly, that the breach of Sabbath laws was more serious than the breach of those laws which are inherently moral laws.

Jesus found Himself continually and sharply in conflict with the Sabbatarians. On the occasion on which the words of my text were spoken the conflict was this: as He and His disciples were going through the corn fields on the Sabbath Day, they picked the fresh heads of grain and ate them as they passed along. The Pharisees declared that this was technically work, the reaping of the grain, and therefore prohibited on the Sabbath Day. This was the pretence of the Sabbath, losing sight of its object and purpose in the consideration of the outward form, making man the slave of the Sabbath law instead of realising that the Sabbath law was for the purpose of

making his life happier, brighter, more restful and more at peace with God. So Jesus uttered this very common-sense protest against the Sabbatarians: "The sabbath was made for man, and not man for the sabbath: so that the Son of man is lord even over the sabbath." Grasping the principle for which the Sabbath exists, we are to use ordinary common sense in the application of that principle. You will remember other cases of conflict. For instance, once our Lord healed a man with a withered hand on the Sabbath. Scribes and Pharisees protested that He broke the Sabbath Day by doing work.

Now primarily the Sabbath was for rest. "Remember that thou keep holy the Sabbath Day," was the old Mosaic word, the original law of the Hebrews. When later thinkers and religious leaders tried to explain the origin of the Sabbath, they explained it either as something which commenced with creation, God Himself resting on the Sabbath, when through six days He had toiled in making the universe; or as something connected with the origin of the Jewish people, that, as they had been slaves in Egypt and there toiled for others, so they must realise the need of rest for all, and on one day in the week give respite from toil to the slaves that toiled for them and to their very beasts of burden.[1] Later Judaism connected the worship of God with this day in a special manner in the synagogue services, because on this day men were free from toil and therefore it was especially feasible to gather together for the study of the Law, for prayer and meditation. At the same time

[1] The one explanation will be found in what we may call the commentary on the Sabbath Word in Exodus xx., the other in Deuteronomy v.

they also made this a day of gladness, of pleasant social intercourse, and of orderly merry-making.

When Christianity became the heir of Judaism, a certain part of the Sabbath idea was transferred to Sunday. The true Lord's day or Sunday was based primarily not on the Sabbath law, but on personal devotion to Jesus Christ. It was a weekly commemoration, on the first day of each week, of His glorious resurrection, a day on which Christians gathered together for receiving the Holy Communion, for telling the tale of Jesus, and making application of His teaching to the matters of their daily life. When the state became Christianised, then this day was made a holiday, and little by little the Jewish Sabbath of rest was transferred to the Christian Sunday of worship and the two combined in one. Oddly enough, at and after the Reformation, among English sectarians, there developed a novel and hitherto unheard of conception of the Sabbath, which ultimately influenced the whole Anglo-Saxon world, the "Puritan Sabbath," the conception underlying which seemed to be not primarily the biblical conception of Sabbath rest and gladness, but an unbiblical and even anti-biblical conception of quiet and sadness. The emphasis was put not on abstention from labour, that those who toil may have their opportunity of rest and refreshment and merry-making, but of abstention from and prohibition of all amusement; the question of abstention from labour being really made secondary to that of abstention from recreation.

It is strange how, in the development of a religion, people will sometimes reach the opposite pole from that at which they start, and utilise the name of the founder

of the religion in support of that which is the direct opposite of his teaching. Our Lord Himself accepted Sabbath Day invitations to dinner. He and His disciples took part in the orderly merry-making of the Jewish Sabbath, which was an essential feature of the Sabbath observance in His time; but many of His followers of to-day would denounce their brethren who should do the same thing now as un-Christian or anti-Christian in their conduct. Similarly our Lord and His followers used wine, and even commended its use; but, in this country at least, some Christians make abstention from all liquor an essential of their religion. What in reality our combined Sunday and Sabbath should be is a day of rest from toil, a day of worship, and a day of wholesome recreation and merry-making; but first and foremost a day of rest from toil. There is the great reality of the Sabbath, and I am afraid I must say that the churches and Churchmen, who have often been so insistent in fighting against what they call the desecration of the Sabbath Day for purposes of excursions, the opening of places of amusement and the like, have failed to concern themselves with the great reality of securing for all who labour an opportunity for rest and recreation.

The thoughts of municipal and social students and reformers have been latterly much concentrated upon Pittsburgh, and many interesting investigations have been made into the industrial conditions prevailing in the great mills of that city, the social life of the mill-hands and operatives, their housing conditions, their home life, and the like. From the investigations made it would seem that in many of the great steel works the workmen are obliged to work seven days in the week

and in general twelve hours a day, the wages of sixty per cent. of the workers being not more than sixteen and one half cents an hour, or two dollars for a twelve-hour day. These conditions are simply brutalising and degrading. Co-incidentally another investigation was made, dealing with the liquor problem, and it appeared that under these conditions the men spend more upon liquor than those do who elsewhere have higher wages and better hours. The brutalising influence of their living conditions leads them to seek brutish pleasures.

Now here is the sort of thing that Christian men should denounce and fight against. Here is the work for your women's Sabbath Alliances and the like to take up,—to secure to such men as these reasonable hours of toil, reasonable remuneration, and a day of rest in every week.

But Pittsburgh is not the only place where such conditions prevail. The same or similar conditions prevail in other cities also, and the Church has not been a leader in curing them. It has not taken the part which it should in uniting with the labouring men, backing their demands for reasonable hours and for a day of rest. Reputable and religious men and women are stockholders in corporations in this city which are violating the very fundamental principle of the Sabbath law. How dare they make money out of the oppression of the poor? How dare they derive their dividends from a business which compels men to work like slaves seven days in every week? Remember that you were slaves in the land of Egypt and see to it that you make no other people work as slaves as you worked, but that you grant to all whom you employ, directly or indirectly, the rest

which is their due, and which is needed for wholesome living and the development of mind and soul and body. That was the law of the Jew as interpreted by the Hebrew prophets; and in principle it is the law of the Christian also. But even as you sit here you can hear the noise of the trolleys running up and down this avenue. They must run Sunday as well as week days, you say, and there are many other sorts of work which must go on through all the week; but there is no proper reason why the individual men or women who do the necessary Sunday work should be compelled to work seven days through without a rest. And yet those who work on Sunday are not in fact given a day of rest at some other time during the week. There are boys and girls and men and women in this congregation who have no day of rest whatever. It is with great difficulty, even, and then only at rare intervals, that they can attend Church services, because their employers, either for their own greed, or more often through the fault of the system under which they live, keep them at work on Sundays as on week days.

Here is the great reality of the Sabbath: one day's rest in seven. If you, as Christian men and women, are concerned for the observance of the Sabbath, that is what you should demand and what you should insist upon. You cannot be parties to this breach of divine law, you cannot profit from it, and you must labour to change these conditions.

And now, what is the pretence of the Sabbath? I am sick and disgusted with the men and women who, with mawkish sentimentality and often, as it seems to me, utter hypocrisy, wink at and share in these fundamen-

tal violations of the Sabbath, but hold up their hands in holy horror if hard-worked men and women seek recreation, merriment, and refreshment on that day. These are they who make a pretence of the Sabbath,—the people who are concerned in blocking amusement and gladness and social intercourse, and who have nothing to say against the cruel desecration of the Sabbath by enforced labour. One day's rest in seven: that is the great principle. The day itself makes relatively little difference. To the Jew there seemed to be something sacrosanct in the seventh day, but we, following the leadership of Christ, broke from that, for we know no days which are holy as such. We start upon the principle: a rest from toil for all who labour, one day in seven; the opportunity to lead a rational life, to have some time for refreshment and recreation, some time when it is possible to improve the mind, some time which one can give to the education and refreshment of the soul.

Our Sunday laws are a perfect chaos. The original principle on which they were founded seems to have been rather a supposed religious sanctity attaching to the first day of the week than the idea of securing for all an opportunity to rest from toil and labour one day in seven. Gradually, perhaps, we are moving toward this latter position, but in doing so many inconsistencies have been brought about. Some special interest succeeds in getting a measure through the Legislature which permits a certain class of work on Sunday or the sale of certain classes of things. One thing may be sold, another not. It is lawful to open your shop to sell tobacco on Sunday, or newspapers, or delicatessen, or confectionery. It is not lawful to sell magazines or canned

goods or bottled goods. A delicatessen shop or a drug store or a tobacconist's may stand open all day long and sell what it will, but a grocery shop or the book store or the baker's next door suffers a penalty if it opens and sells the same things. More confusing than the laws themselves are the extraordinary and incongruous decisions of our courts. I should not wish to be indicted for contempt of court, but I think I speak within bounds in saying that the courts of this state certainly, and of this city especially, have not earned by their actions and decisions the respect of the intelligent portion of the community, and that they have helped to increase that contempt of law, that lawlessness which is characteristic of the great mass of our people.

With regard to amusements and recreations the situation is still worse, and it is extremely difficult to secure any rational legislation, because of the combination of a class of sentimentalists who, under the name of religion, stand for the pretence of the Sabbath, and of shysters, grafters, and vicious politicians who prefer to have laws which are inconsistent, unjust, and impossible of enforcement, so as to give the better opportunity to violate all law or profit by its violation. And worst of all, for these very reasons, is the situation regarding the liquor traffic. If you keep a hotel or a bawdy house, you may sell liquor on Sunday, but if you keep a restaurant or a saloon, the sale of liquor is forbidden, under the strictest penalties.

"The sabbath was made for man, and not man for the sabbath: so that the Son of man is lord even over the sabbath." Take home to yourselves the words of our Lord Christ; seek realities in this Sunday matter, and

remember that it is not the day itself which is the end, it is something which lies behind that,—the avoidance of oppression, an opportunity of rest and recreation for every man; that his toil should be limited to reasonable hours, that he should have opportunities for refreshment, enjoyment, merry-making, and that some time should be given him for this purpose. With our system of the week of seven days, the natural and logical method is to give to this one day in seven.

Finally, do not seek to impose your preconceived ideas upon others in the name of God. Let them have the freedom of their thoughts and their beliefs and their practices.

WISDOM

(TO YOUNG MEN)

PROVERBS iii., 13: Happy is the man that findeth wisdom, and the man that getteth understanding.

THE Book of Proverbs belongs to that division of Hebrew literature called Wisdom. The wisdom here commended is that sanctified common sense which is in harmony with the conditions of life and therefore with God, because those conditions of life come from God. Adhesion to these principles, the Book of Proverbs teaches, will bring prosperity and happiness.

The main part of the Book of Proverbs consists of a collection of maxims looking to the establishment of a safe, peaceful, and happy life in the family and the community. We have here neither a code of laws nor a discussion of the great foundation principles which govern the universe and which should inspire and control the life of man. Some of the precepts contained in the Book of Proverbs sound like merely selfish, prudential considerations, and indeed all proverbial literature has something of that Poor Richard quality in it with which Americans of an earlier generation were so familiar from the maxims of Franklin. It is worth noting that in a collection of religious literature which we regard as inspired there should be a book containing maxims of

this character, emphasising the fact that prudence, thrift, honesty, equity, morality are of great importance in our daily life, because their observance will bring comfort and prosperity.

And now for one minute let us consider the book itself. If you will read the book with any care, you will see that it is not one collection of proverbs, but several. Here is a heading, at the beginning of Chapter X., which tells you that what follows is a collection of maxims known as the "Proverbs of Solomon." You turn on a little farther and in the 22d chapter, the 17th verse, you will find another heading, "The Words of the Wise Men." In this collection is contained that little poem on the miseries of drunkenness, commencing: "Who says alas! who laments, who complains? They that sit over their wine, they that are always tasting drink." Then the wine is described as "smooth to go down; afterward it bites like a snake; your eyes see strange things; your heart speaks bad things; you are like a man lying down at sea, like a man asleep at the top of a mast." You turn on a little farther to the 24th chapter, the 23d verse, and find another heading: "These also are sayings of the wise men." It is this collection which contains the famous description of the sluggard: "I passed the field of a sluggard, the vineyard of a foolish man, and, see, it was overgrown with thorns; it was all covered over with nettles, its stone wall was broken down. I looked and laid it to heart; I saw and took warning therefrom."

Commencing with the 25th chapter we have another collection of so-called "Proverbs of Solomon," copied out, we are told, by the men of Hezekiah, King of Judah. Go on a little farther, to the 30th chapter, and you find

"The Words of Agur, Son of Yakeh." In the same chapter is a collection of riddles; then follow "The Words of King Lemuel," and then, at the close of all, in the latter part of the 31st chapter, an acrostic poem, a description of the virtuous housewife.

Now, is not this interesting, as showing that we have collected in this book not the proverbs of one man only, but the proverbial wisdom of a people? These collections show a growth of this proverbial wisdom, covering a considerable period of time, the formation of collection after collection of proverbs; and so sometimes the same proverb is repeated in different collections. Solomon's name is attached to the book as we have it, not because he wrote these proverbs and poems, but because his name had come to be the synonym of proverbial wisdom, and hence his name was attached by the Jews to all such literature, whenever it was composed. Even as late as the time of Herod, that is, roughly, nine hundred years after Solomon, we find a book, not included in our Bible, in which reference is made to the death of Pompey, with the name of Solomon attached to it. A strange custom, this seems to us, but it was a custom very prevalent in those old times.

These collections of proverbs represent the accumulated experience of the race of God-fearing Jews. Note the words with which the whole book opens:

"The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge;
The foolish despise wisdom and instruction;
Hear, my son, the instruction of thy father,
And forsake not the teachings of thy mother."

It is the experience of the race which has been passed

down that constitutes this wisdom. This wisdom is founded on the fear of, that is, the religion of God, and this wisdom the youth should acquire from father and mother.

Some of the proverbs, as I have said, are strictly prudential and in so far selfish in their character as that they deal with one's duty towards oneself, like this: "He catches a strange dog by the ears that meddles in other men's strife." That is: Mind your own business and do not interfere with the quarrels of other people. Of a similar character is this admonition to silence with regard to one's own affairs:

> "He that guards his mouth is safe;
> He that opes his mouth is lost";

or this recommendation not to assert one's own merits:

> "Let another praise you and not yourself;
> A stranger and not your own lips";

which reminds one, in certain ways, of our Lord's advice to those that are bidden to a feast not to take the chief place, lest another more honourable come and you be forced to surrender the seat to him. It is better to take a lowly place, so that when he that bade you come he may say to you, "Come up higher, and you shall have honour of them that sit at meat." Some are shrewd characterisations of types of men whom we all know, like this: "Clouds and wind without rain; a man that promises and does not give." Commendations of the simple life are frequent: "Some are rich and have nothing; some are poor with great wealth." Thrift and the value of hard labour are emphasised: "Too much

honey is not good; there is honour in hard tasks." One of the sharpest of all the proverbs condemns the thoughtless fool—the practical joker, who, seeking his own fun, produces often most tragical results: "Like a madman dealing death with firebrands and arrows is he that deceives his neighbour and says, Am I not in sport?" Throughout all runs the assertion of the retribution that awaits evil-doing: "Who digs a pit shall fall in it; who rolls a stone, it shall come back to him."

Without a formal statement of the law of love, many of the proverbs breathe its spirit, setting forth, after the practical manner of this literature, the fact that love and kindliness do bring happiness. So we have this proverb: "The life of the flesh is a sound heart; but envy is rottenness of the bones." And this: "Who covers an error seeks love; who harps on it loses a friend".

The small virtues are exalted in these proverbial sayings, as, for instance, the great value of the kindly word: "Pleasant words are a honeycomb; sweet to the soul and health to the bones." In contrast with this is a proverb applicable to those whose glad words cause pain and not pleasure because they result from lack of sympathy with the condition of another. Hear this: "Vinegar upon a wound; one that sings songs to a heavy heart." The great Goethe's favourite proverb was one of those dealing with the fitting use of words: "Apples of gold in silver setting; words smoothly spoken." One may compare with this proverb, meant to describe the value of soft speech, another proverb intended to warn against the danger of smooth words used to cover evil thoughts: "Silver dross laid on a pot of clay; smooth lips and a wicked heart."

My object is not to discuss the Book of Proverbs; but there is so much that is fascinating in it that when one begins one is tempted to call attention first to this and then to that nugget of wit and practical wisdom; the exhortations to honesty: "Dishonest bread is sweet to the taste; afterward the mouth is full of gravel"; the description of the bargainer, who existed then, as he (or she) does to-day, even among good Christian people, who boasts of overreaching his neighbour: "Bad, bad, says the buyer; then he goes out and boasts of it"; the characterisation of the effects of careless workmanship, producing consequences as disastrous as if they were wrought with full intention of evil: "He that is careless in his work is own brother to the destroyer"; the quaint bits of wisdom that deal with the perplexities of marital and domestic life, generally from the point of view of the man, and yet with a high estimation of womanly virtue: "House and goods are inherited; but a wife is a gift from the Lord." But hear this proverb on the woman whose only merit is her face: "A gold ring in a pig's snout; a fair woman without sense."

Before leaving the proverbs themselves, I wish to say that the very highest reach of the practical teaching of love in the Old Testament is contained in one of the sayings of this book, which comes very close to the teaching of our Lord. "If your enemy hunger, feed him, if he thirst, give him water to drink; so you heap coals of fire on his head, and the Lord will reward you." But even this contains the thought, not of the inward spiritual blessing, but of the external reward which results from doing good. The position of the book in this regard

may be said to be summed up in this proverb: "Who follows righteousness and love, finds life, success, and honour."

The Book of Proverbs as it exists is what we commonly call an anthology—collections of sayings, or selections from collections of sayings, combined together. To these collections there has been prefixed an introduction. This introduction, which is of a somewhat composite character, comprises the first nine chapters of the book. In it the author undertakes to set forth the characteristics of wisdom. He addresses himself especially to young men. You will remember how over and over again occur the words "my son." It is a warning to the young man against the evils and dangers of life, and an exhortation to him to learn wisdom, because success and happiness in life depend upon the adhesion to those principles of morality which he designates as wisdom. The experience and practice of mankind, the wisest and best of them through the ages, have shown that departure from these principles means disaster; and if God be the maker and governor of the universe, which the writer assumes without question to be the case, then that is proof that these principles are from God. True wisdom is to understand and follow these divine principles as expressed in God's universe. "To find wisdom and get understanding," to know God's ways, and put that knowledge in practice is to become master of oneself and of the universe. Therefore, above all things let the young man's effort be to acquire wisdom. Sometimes the author personifies wisdom as though it were itself God or the expression of God to men:

"Wisdom crieth aloud in the street;
She uttereth her voice in the squares;
At the head of thoroughfares she crieth;
At the gates of the city she speaketh her words;
How long, ye fools, will ye love folly?"

With all his might he emphasises wisdom as the thing which, above all, is to be sought. "First wisdom; get wisdom; with all thou hast, get understanding." That this wisdom is not, in the conception of the writer, something separate from religion is made clear by such passages as this, which occur in this same prologue: "Trust in the Lord with all thy heart. Lean not upon thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge Him and He shall make plain thy paths."

The verse which I have taken as my text is the beginning of a brief passage in this prologue, a poem by itself, which describes the excellence of wisdom. The passage reads:

"Happy the man that findeth wisdom,
The mortal that getteth understanding.
For its gain is better than gain of silver,
And the profit thereof than fine gold.
More precious is she than pearls;
And none of thy treasures are equal thereto;
Length of days in her right hand,
In her left hand riches and honour;
Her ways, ways of pleasantness,
And all her paths peace.
She is a tree of life to them that lay hold on her;
And happy is he that obtaineth her."

"Happy the man that findeth wisdom, the mortal that getteth understanding": the young man who, in the beginning of his career, puts himself in harmony with God and the universe, determining his life by the divine, God-given principles of the universe, and setting out to work with, not in opposition to, God and the nature which God has placed in him.

1. What do you purpose to be or to do in life? There was a story connected with a room which I occupied in Yale College, told to me by my predecessor and passed on by me to those who came after, as follows: James Kent, the famous Chancellor of New York, 1814 to 1823, occupied that room[1] as an undergraduate. After he had become Chancellor, on the occasion of one of his class reunions, he sought out and revisited the old room. In answer to his knock a student's voice bade him come in. He entered, to see a young man sitting in a chair, tilted back, with his feet on the window-sill. "Young gentleman," he said, "one evening at about this time I was sitting in precisely the attitude which you now occupy and thinking about my future life. I then and there resolved to become Chancellor of the State of New York. My name is James Kent. I am Chancellor of the State of New York."

It is not often that a man's plan and purpose of life can be carried out with such literal exactness as in this case, but in general it may be said that what a man resolves to do or to be he can achieve or become if he really makes that the object of his life, concentrat-

[1] If the tradition of my time was correct, this room was in Old South Middle, still standing, north entry, third floor, front, middle.

ing all his powers and energies on the pursuit of that one thing. Success in life depends on self determination, to an extent which I think most people do not fully apprehend. At the outset of your life set an aim before you; have a definite purpose. Do not merely drift, letting your life be determined by chance or circumstance.

2. For the achievement of the purpose which you set before you, if that purpose be at all worth achieving, there is need, first and foremost, of absolute mastery of yourself, of self-control and self-denial. You cannot use your strength, your time, your means, if you have such, for self-indulgence, and pleasure seeking, with any hope of making that success in life of which I am speaking. To quote once more from the Book of Proverbs: "The man that loves pleasure is poor; he that loves luxury does not grow rich." A story which every Jewish boy has had held before him as the life story of one of his race heroes whom he is to imitate, a story which has come down to us also as part of our spiritual heritage from the Jews, so that their race hero has become for us a spiritual hero, is the story of Jacob. I do not mean to say that the character of Jacob is altogether lovely, or that all that is told of him in that story is worthy of imitation; but the essential elements of his character, which are emphasised in the contrast between him and Esau, are worthy of imitation. The man who will practise thrift, the man who will deny himself the immediate gain for the sake of the greater ultimate good, the man who will wait patiently to achieve his results,—with that man lies success, and not with the good-hearted, good-natured, easy-going,

improvident fellow. The latter represents not the genius of civilisation, but the genius of barbarism, in that he lives merely for the moment. It is Jacob, not Esau, who is the type of civilisation, and who is bound to win that success, the achievement of which is a part of civilisation in the race and in the individual. Be content to begin at the bottom, to go slowly. It is as true in the struggle of human life as it is in the life history of the animals, that the higher order reaches its development the more slowly. The guinea-pig is born practically with all the sense and all the faculties which it is ever going to have. A rabbit or a squirrel does not know as much when it is born and cannot do as much as a guinea-pig, but when it reaches maturity it is vastly in advance of the guinea-pig. No animal takes so long a period for its development as the human animal, and none reaches even approximately the development of the human. So it is in our life struggle. The young man who wishes to commence at the top, who must needs have at once the time and money for amusement, or even the man who would marry as soon as he starts on his career, cannot expect to reach the same level of success as the man who is willing to forego the satisfaction of his desires and even his ambitions for pleasure and comfort and happiness for the moment, beginning at the bottom, learning, earning little, but preparing the way for ultimate greater success, and, if he live aright, greater happiness also.

3. Diligence and Energy. He who would succeed must be diligent in whatever labour he undertakes and he must perform his work with energy and zeal. Intelligence and tact, special adaptability to a work or

peculiar quickness in comprehension seem to be rather gifts of nature than qualities which we can acquire by effort. Diligence and energy, on the other hand, are quite within the control of any man, and in the end it will be found that diligence and energy are among the most powerful agencies which a man can employ in the struggle for success. To employ all your opportunities, to utilise your spare minutes, to throw yourself into the work which you have to do, in your profession or employment, or in your preparation for that profession or employment, with all the strength of your being, will inevitably result in a large measure of success.

4. Now, combine with diligence and energy *honesty* and *reliability*, and any man has an asset which will secure him permanent and valuable employment. There is no individual asset of the average man more valuable than honesty, and there is none in fact rarer. I have coupled with honesty reliability, in order to express a particular application of honesty: that you may be counted on under all circumstances to be always in your place, to do your work, whatever the conditions which confront you, so that your employer may trust you as fully as he would trust himself; that you do not count merely what you are compelled to do, saying to yourself: I am paid for this and this I must do, but more than that I am not obliged to do. Throw yourself into the position of your employer, and act for his interests, so that he is able to rely upon you in any case of emergency or need, so that he may feel that he has your willing support and co-operation, and not a mere grudging performance of a task to which you are

enslaved, precisely to the extent of the remuneration which you receive for the work done.

I have said that honesty is rare. The conditions which I find among the young people with whom I have to deal convince me of that, as well as what I learn with reference to the conduct of business by grown-up men and women. I find that in our schools it is, as a rule, unsafe to leave anything lying about; there is danger of loss. Even in Church guilds and organisations we have constant unfortunate experiences of pilfering. Again, when labourers are working about the premises, there are apt to be disappearances of easily portable properties. All business men know how very difficult it is to find employees who can be trusted implicitly. To you young men I would say that the reputation for absolute honesty is a possession so precious from the mere point of view of success in life, that it may be fairly estimated as the equivalent of a considerable capital in business. But honesty must be established on principle. The man who is honest because honesty is the best policy, a proverb which is profoundly true, is not the man who can be thus relied upon. Looking on honesty only from the point of view of policy, occasions will arise where it will seem to a man clear that he can profit best by not adhering too strictly to the course of honesty. Now the very fact that a man might do this makes itself evident in his character and his bearing; for the principles which we hold are apt to express themselves in some intangible way in our bearing, and, far more than we ordinarily think, people gauge us by the truth which really lies behind all

our expressions. They perceive and feel our characters.

One of the commonest of the temptations which lead our young men away from the path of strict honesty is the temptation to win money quickly and easily through speculation or gambling. Now, gambling or speculation is in itself immoral, in that it is an attempt to get something for nothing. But besides being in this sense immoral, gambling or speculation is also hopelessly demoralising to character. This man sees others win money by gambling, by a so-called speculation in stocks, that is a deal in margins, which is practically nothing more than betting that stock will rise or fall, or how high it will rise or how low it will fall, or by betting on the horse-races; or possibly he sees some one win ten dollars or more on a five cent bet in policy. It seems to him a very easy way of turning over money and he resolves to take his chance. He has a little money which he has saved from his earnings; it is his own and he can do with it what he will. The only too common result which follows from this beginning of gambling is that before he realises it the young man has incurred losses which go beyond his means, and to pay those losses he has used money which was not his, but which happened to be temporarily in his control or trust. He must repay this money, and the only way which he sees open to do so is by a lucky bet or speculation. He feels sure that luck must come his way some time. He speculates or bets again, and before he knows it he is hopelessly involved. It does not always happen that events follow just this course, but even where the gambling does not result in utter ruin, it does waste

the money which the young man should have been laying up as a capital for investment. And even if he should win by his bets or speculations, the result is unfortunate for him, looked at from the business standpoint, for it teaches him to disregard those legitimate business methods of thrift and energy which would win him real success, and devote himself to a course of action which, though it may yield him a certain degree of financial gain, will never advance him to the same high position, much less develop in him the same character, which honest industry and capacity would have done.

5. Strenuousness and enjoyment. I have pictured to you what, in the phraseology of the day, is designated as a "strenuous life"; but this I wish to point out —that mere strenuousness may overreach itself. There is a life lived by successful business men in this city which is a life to be deplored, not to be envied. These are the men who rush from engagement to engagement, from task to task, who live their lives in a whirlwind, pursuing ever greater gain, who have no time for the real enjoyment of life or for the development of character. Remember that the greatest success is not mere achievement, but character. The greatest happiness is connected not with what a man has done, but with what a man has become. The Japanese say of us, and rightly, that we are so concerned with the machinery of life that we do not know how to live. The means have taken the place of the end. Your effort and your struggle are, from the standpoint of the achievement of substantial happiness, futile if you have lost the power of enjoyment. The man who, in the hurry and rush of

his life, has lost the power of enjoying the beauties of nature, of art, of literature, is a man who has lost the power of the highest happiness. Remember this in your struggle for place and success.

6. And this brings me to a consideration of the question of what is the reality? For it is after that which is real that you must strive. What, then, is the real thing, the thing which it is desirable to possess? You hear much to-day of the simple life. I take it that the essence of the simple life is reality; but to know and gain the reality you must be true to yourself, to your own nature. You must yourself determine what really is worth having, not simply seek after that which those about you call real. If your life is to be determined merely by the opinions of others; if you determine what you are to be and what you are to do, what you are to seek after and what you are to gain, only according to the opinions of those about you, you can never enter into the full pleasure of life. You have failed to find the reality. The same is true of your friendships. If your friendships are formed simply with the idea that "this person can assist me, help me forward, he is a good person to have as my friend, this is the correct person to know and I will make him my friend," you lose the power of knowing the hearts of men; your own best nature is chilled and ultimately killed, and you lose the very most precious thing in life—the power of real friendship and the knowledge of real love.

7. Right choice. I have spoken of the possibility of self-determination, of your achieving that at which you aim, reaching that to which you aspire; but it goes without saying that in considering the question of

real success we must ask, also, How am I to determine that after which I shall strive? How shall I make the right choice in life? We are so bound up with one another that we oftentimes cannot reach that which we would like to set before ourselves as our goal without trampling upon others who are about us, without disregarding what seem to be our nearest duties. It is possible to achieve success by trampling on others, by disregarding these duties; but that success is, in the end, not worth having. It is a success of achievement, not a success of character. I told you the story of Chancellor Kent. Let me tell you another story from my own experience. When I was a young man but recently ordained, there came under my spiritual charge, in the little chapel in which I was working, a journeyman printer, somewhat older than myself, who wished to send through me what, in proportion to his means, seemed an enormous contribution, for the education of young men for the ministry. Then I learned that he had, as a lad, desired to study for the ministry. He was going through school with that end in view. He would have passed from the grammar school to the high school, from the high school to college. By his own efforts and those of his parents it was perfectly possible for him to do so. Suddenly his father died, leaving nothing. This boy was the oldest. There was a mother and there were other children to be taken care of. By himself he could have accomplished the course of study and entered the ministry. If he had disregarded the obligation to his mother and younger brothers and sisters he could have struggled through. Possibly they might have succeeded in taking care of

themselves; but he felt that his first duty lay toward them, and, abandoning the attempt to complete his education, temporarily as he hoped, he set himself to learn a trade by which he could at once commence to support his family. Circumstances were such that by the time he was set free from these obligations it seemed impracticable to attempt to enter the ministry. He was too old to go back and take up his studies at the point where he had left them. All his time and all his strength had been so employed in the intervening period that he had not been able to continue intellectual pursuits. What he had been unable to do for himself, he sought to make possible for some one else. Now I say that that man did the thing that was right and that he achieved a greater success than if he had entered the ministry—a greater success in the sense that he developed a nobler, higher nature, which is really the thing after which we strive and should strive, but which is to be achieved oftentimes only by precisely such abnegation of self and self-interest. Your choice of what you will do and become must be determined in connection with the obligations of your life and your surroundings. Failure to fulfil obligations which are laid upon you by the conditions of your existence would be to make what seems success really failure.

8. The ideal and the maintenance of the ideal. And this further I would add with regard to the right choice: Hold before yourself an ideal. Let that ideal be an exalted one. Do not be content with anything mean or small or common. It sometimes seems to men that these ideals are a burden and a hindrance in their struggle in life. They say to themselves: here are men

about me who do this or that and make a success, yet there is something within me that forbids me from doing what they do, and, because I cannot do it, therefore I am a failure. So far from burdening or hindering you in the struggle for real success in life, the ideal is that which really renders such success possible. No one can achieve the best results who does not have ideals and dreams. They are the things which are meant to lure a man on to higher things. Be sorry not for yourself because you have them, but be sorry for the man who does not have them and therefore cannot know that joy in life which is possible for you if you strive and struggle for the attainment of your ideal. But just because the ideal is so high a thing, therefore its loss means to you who possess it the greatest possible disaster. A man who has not seen ideals and dreamed of high things may do something which seems abhorrent to you and yet be going not backwards but forwards; but you, with your ideals and dreams, if you do those things will surely fail. To do them means for you soul death. Count the ideal or dream that is within you as a gift and a promise from God, but understand the condition on which it is given you: that if you, seeing these good and beautiful things, then turn backward and content yourself with something that is lower, your life will be made miserable by the gnawings of conscience, by the constant sense of failure. You will enter here on earth into the gates of hell. Maintain your ideals as you value your souls and as you value happiness. No outward success is worth having which is purchased with the gnawing misery of the consciousness that you have failed to do or to be

what you know and believe you should have done and become.

9. The value of the personal knowledge of God. I may not close without adding one word on the value of the personal knowledge of God; that you should be conscious of the divine nature within you, of the meaning of your life and its grandeur; that you are workers with God Himself for great ends; that your life is an enduring one, which goes on through the ages that are to be; and that, long as the years which stretch before you in this world seem, they are as nothing in comparison with the ages of possibility which stretch on beyond. Jesus Christ is the expression to us of God, through whom we may enter into a personal knowledge of Him; He is a pattern to show us the meaning and possibilities of life, the power of self-determination, the possibilities of achievement in the lowliest conditions, the wonderful power which lies in our human nature to overcome the world, if we are true to that which is essentially divine in that nature itself; and, more than this, He is a manifestation to us of the very heart and thought of God, by which we may know His purpose toward us individually, and attain such a certainty of His love for us that we shall not lose heart nor fail, and so that even out of our faults and our falls we shall reap strength and courage through the assurance of His tender personal care for us, His watchful providence over us. The precepts of a book of wisdom will not of themselves be sufficient to hold us in the way of truth. The precepts and teaching which the parent gives the child win their greatest value, not from the words of wisdom themselves, but from that something which

lies behind those words, the something which makes a true father or mother. And it is so with the wisdom which you find recorded in the Book of Proverbs. Practical and profound as all those sayings may be, you will not walk in the way of wisdom unless you feel behind that wisdom something more than the practical experience of the ages, unless you feel behind it the thought and the love of God your Father. Enter into that personal relation with God as your Father through Christ the eternal Son.

LITTLE FOXES

(TO YOUNG WOMEN)

SONG OF SOLOMON ii., 15: Take us the foxes, the little foxes, that spoil the vines: for our vines have tender grapes.

THE Song of Solomon, as it is called in our Bibles, the Song of Songs, or Canticles, to use its more correct title, is a collection of love songs, marriage hymns. One who reads the Bible only casually, and to whom the headings of the chapters mean more than their contents, may be somewhat surprised at the statement that we have in the Bible a book entirely composed of love songs. But these are not the only love songs in the Old Testament. If you will take up your Bibles and turn to the 45th Psalm, you will find it designated in the heading as a Song of Love. In it the bride is pictured as a queen and the bridegroom as a king. And just so it is in the love songs contained in our book of the Song of Solomon. Throughout it the bride is spoken of as a queen and the bridegroom as a king: and that is to-day the oriental custom. Marriage is a thing so beautiful, so lofty, that the bride and groom, because they are the principals in the marriage, for the time being become in fact kings and queens.

Now why, you may ask, do we have love songs in the Bible? I thought the Bible was a book of religion; I thought the Old Testament told me the story of the struggles of God's people and how God's spirit was with them, preparing the way for the coming of the Christ.

Turn to your New Testament. The first miracle, according to St. John's Gospel, which Jesus performed, in Cana of Galilee, was at a marriage festival, when He thought it not unfit to use those same powers which elsewhere He used for the healing of the sick and the restoration of the miserable, to turn the water into wine, that the bridegroom might not be disgraced and that there might be joy and gladness at the marriage festival. God's spirit moves not only in the great affairs of state; God's spirit moves in the small affairs of every-day life, and Jesus Christ emphasised most strongly the sanctity of marriage, its sacramental character: that nothing may part the man and the woman who are united in the bonds of matrimony. Is it not fitting, then, that there should be somewhere in the Bible a book which dwells upon and glorifies the love of man and woman as a sacred thing? And I think that it is well for you and me to-day, in this our country, to remember that there is such a book in the Bible, to remember that God's holy word sanctifies and adorns that love and its expression.

I have referred to the headings of the chapters. They represent a mystical interpretation of the book, as indicating the love of Christ and His Church, and their union; and it is this same thought that our Church has introduced into its marriage ceremony. That is the

mystic significance which sanctifies and uplifts the love of man and woman.

But it is not my intention to dwell upon the interpretation of this book as a whole. I have chosen a text from it, not because of its original significance, but because of the meaning which it has come to have to me. Because the Bible is the Book of God, because men and women have gone to it to find God's word, so, in the course of the ages, different books and chapters have come to have new and different meanings, meanings which have grown out of their use in the Church in those ages.

Take up the Book of Psalms. Turn to the 68th Psalm, and you find a magnificent processional, meant to be used in connection with the temple services, based on the story of Israel's march from Sinai into Palestine and its conquest of the Holy Land. But I cannot read that Psalm without remembering that it was the battle hymn of Henry of Navarre; and there comes before my mind the struggle for religious freedom in France, when men were fighting and dying for the right to read the Bible, for the right to believe and live according to the dictates of their consciences, guided by God's holy word. I turn to the 115th Psalm, and there I read a splendid outburst of praise to the one God Almighty, who is not like the idols of wood and stone that cannot see nor hear, by whose power Israel has been kept and preserved amid the heathen; and then there comes before my mind the picture of the siege of Vienna, when the great hosts of the Turks were pressing the Christian capital hard. I see the tower of St. Stephen's in Vienna and the anxious lookouts stationed there, looking over

the vast hordes of Turks, straining their eyes to see if help were coming, while the Christian nations of Europe, unconscious of their danger, not realising that the fall of Vienna meant for them too the invasion of the hordes of Islam, were fighting with one another their unworthy wars, petty princes struggling each with the other for the satisfaction of his vain ambition. But help came from an unexpected quarter. John Sobieski, with his Poles, appeared upon the Kahlenberg, the hill that rises near Vienna; and there to-day you can see the little chapel where he and his officers received the Sacrament, as they prepared to descend upon the vast multitudes of the victorious Turks. And then they lifted up their voices, joining in the 115th Psalm, that hymn of praise to God which Israel had used of old, glorifying His power and might, who was greater than the gods of the heathen. That Psalm gave them the inspiration to win the victory that saved Europe.

The Bible is full of associations like that, which bind it to the history of the Christian Church throughout the ages. But not only into the lives of princes, not only into battles for freedom and against oppression,—it has gone also into the every-day life of the people. It has been an inspiration in the homes of the poorest. It has given men strength to do the daily tasks of life. Those experiences are mostly unwritten. Some of you may have some association with one verse or another, with one chapter or another, which makes that verse or chapter mean to you something very personal, something quite outside of Bible dictionaries or commentaries or sermons. When I turn to the 14th chapter of St. John's Gospel and read the words, "In my

Father's house are many mansions," there comes before me the picture of a midnight scene in the house of a poor woman, crushed down by bereavement, a widow whose two children, just on the verge of manhood and womanhood, had been swept off by disease in a manner most tragic and awful; a woman who seemed to have lost control of herself, to have lost all power of thought, all hope in this life or the hereafter. I can never forget how, as those words were read, it seemed as though a new power came into her life, as though the gates of heaven were opened, and the woman's life was changed at once by a vision of the heavenly mansions.

I have chosen my text because of the meaning which Mrs. Harriet Beecher Stowe gave it in a little booklet, whose exact name I have forgotten. "The foxes, the little foxes that spoil the vines," were the little sins that destroy life. It is those little foxes about which I wish to speak to you to-day. The vines are your lives, which should bear precious fruit.

The work of man and woman in the world is, in the very nature of it, different in many points. The great virtues of the man are strength and courage. The man who has not strength and courage to face the world, to conquer its obstacles, is of necessity a failure. The great virtues of the woman are grace and purity. The woman who does not bring charm into her surroundings, who does not give to them a gracious touch, a woman who is not modest and pure in thought and deed, fails to achieve the work for which she came into the world. The special work of man and woman in the world I may perhaps illustrate by the figure of the house and home building. It is the man's part to build the house. You

do not expect the woman to wield the hammer or the saw, to quarry and shape the stone, to carry the hod. These are the works of man. He builds the house. His is the outward part, which catches your eye as you move through the street. Of the house the woman makes a home. She brings into it that grace and charm which make it habitable. Her work in making the home is as important as the man's work in building the house; almost I had said, the work of the woman is the more important of the two. But while this is so, it is also true that woman's work is in general the least seen work; and so there must be a reticence and modesty about the woman's life and ways. The things she does are not exposed to view to every one who passes through the street. A man's work, rough and strong, stands without for all to see and touch and handle. Hers is within, to be seen and enjoyed by intimates only. The man's work is more tangible, the woman's more intangible.

What is true of the building of a house and home is true of the spheres of man and woman throughout. In the struggle to earn daily bread there are fields, of course, in which the two come in competition. It is not always possible to distinguish at every point the inner from the outer. The general distinction is, however, a plain one.

And now, because man's work and woman's work, man's nature and woman's nature, man's place in the world and woman's place in the world differ thus, therefore also their temptations, to some extent certainly, are different, their religion, to some extent, is different. It is the part of each to carry Christ into

every act of life. Each must apply His principles, His life to his or her life and conduct; but the application is different. Perhaps, for this reason, the things I am going to try to say to you would be better said to you by a woman, as they touch those things which more particularly concern a woman's life; and yet, sometimes it is well that a man should bring a message to women, just as that women should bring their message to man. The woman's message to man is usually given in the home training, in the personal intercourse; the man's in the more open and public method of speaking, not to the individual but to the mass; and so I must give my message to you.

Now, I take it that, because of the particular conditions of the life of women, the smaller things affect her more than they do the man. It is possible for him to get away from the petty annoyances as a woman cannot. His larger outside interests render him less likely to turn his thoughts in upon himself. The small things, it is true, affect us all and many a life is made or marred by the little things, which seem so insignificant that we are apt to disregard them. It would be well for all of us if we realised more fully that religion must enter into these things also; that Jesus Christ cared for the very small things of life, as well as for the great; that God Almighty makes and is concerned with the little thoughts, the little words, the little deeds. "Not a sparrow falleth to the ground without the will of your Father in Heaven"; "The hairs of your head are all numbered"; and when God gave His only begotten Son to take upon Himself the nature of man, He was born as a little babe in the house of very poor and lowly

people, whose whole life was made up of the small and insignificant things. It is the little foxes which are most apt to destroy the vines of your life and prevent them from bearing the fruits of joy and holiness and peace, which God meant them to bear for you and for the world. The greater things are more easily seen. People understand their wickedness and wrong. The little things are overlooked. We say they are nothing. It seems to us that God cannot come into those things. Let me name a few of the little foxes.

I think one little fox that I have seen destroy a good many tender vines is untidiness, lack of neatness. How sweet it is to see a girl careful about her person, careful about her surroundings, pleasant to look at, pleasant to deal with. It requires exertion, it requires thought, it requires attention: but it is well worth it all. Go into a household where the mother or the daughters or the sisters are neat and tidy, where everything is clean and sweet. Many a man craves a home like that and cannot find it. Many a man is driven out of his home by the lack of tidiness, neatness, there. Go into a shop and see the girl at the counter who is tidy and neat in her person and her ways; that is the one with whom the customer likes to deal. Well, as I have said, it means effort, it means sometimes a little self-denial in other things, to achieve just that tidiness and neatness. Oh! how many lives of men and women both have I seen hampered by just the lack of cultivation of this one of those little graces which woman was meant to bring into the world. God meant that she should fill the world with grace and beauty and charm, and when she fails, one of God's best gifts is taken away.

It is a little thing, and yet it means so much. That is the first of my little foxes.

And there is another little fox that comes, I think, from the same neighbourhood; and that is the little fox called carelessness. How exasperating it is to have dealings with a person who is careless, drops this here and loses that there, never knows where anything is. How much discomfort is brought into the world by it. Ah! the careless person rarely realises all the pain and trouble that she causes. She does not understand why people do not like to have her touch their things, why they do not want to have her about. That is another little fox that spoils the vines of our life and prevents that life from bearing fruits of joy and peace for ourselves and those about us.

There is another little fox of the same brood, which is called unreliability. "Oh yes, I will do this," and it is not done; "So and so told me so"; and what so and so really told was something quite different. Promises broken, not because there is intention of falsehood; untrue statements made, not for the direct purpose of deceit. Oh! it means so much to be reliable in word or deed, that one may know that when you say you will do a thing, it will be done; that when you say a thing is so, it is just exactly as you tell it. I could tell you of great injury, great calamities, which have come from the work of those little foxes of unreliability and carelessness. Every day of my life I see about me vines that have been hurt, if not altogether ruined, by the ravages of those little foxes.

And now let me mention another—tactlessness. How delightful is a person who has what we call tact.

I do not know how to define tact exactly, but every one knows what tact is. The person who knows how to put you at your ease; not to speak about the wrong thing; to speak about the right thing; to see at this moment and not to see at that moment. It is thoughtfulness put into practice in an almost unconscious way in the little affairs of life; for a person may mean to be very thoughtful and yet, lacking tact, do or say just those things which should not be done or said. Tact is the power of feeling the persons about you. We all of us see one another's bodies, we hear one another's words. It is another thing to come in touch with the soul behind, to feel that person. That is the gift of tact. Gift? Yes, to some persons it is a gift; but it is a gift that may be cultivated, cultivated by the effort to put ourselves into the place of those about, to think one's self into their thoughts, into their needs, so that we do not impose ourselves upon them. There is nothing more gracious than tact. It is a thing to be proud of, a thing to be striven for, a thing which, to some extent, we can all achieve if we only care enough for those about us to forget ourselves a little and try to put ourselves in their places.

Now there is another little fox that hunts with tactlessness, and that fox is egotism. Egotism is different from mere vanity or pure selfishness. It is natural for a little child to babble away about itself. It measures everything by itself; but what is natural in a little child becomes extremely unpleasant and offensive in a grown person. How tired we do become of the person who can talk about nothing except what she has been doing, what she has to wear, whom she knows, what she thinks;

who never is ready to hear what we wear, whom we know, what we think, what we do. It is a very annoying little fox, one that does a great deal of harm among the tender vines of life. There is nothing more precious in life than love; that people should trust you; that people should love you; that people should confide in you. Egotism destroys just that fruit. They cannot trust, love, or confide in one whose whole talk and apparently whole nature is centred in herself. Tactlessness and egotism—yes, these surely and perhaps all the little foxes that I have been speaking of are, you may say, expressions of one great sin, and that is selfishness. But I am not dealing with the great underlying sins. I am dealing with the little foxes.

I think the worst den of those little foxes is at the root of our tongues. There dwells a mother fox, who has a large brood of little foxes that do incalculable harm. Do you remember what St. James says about the tongue? "It is a little matter and boasteth great things. Behold, how much wood a little fire burns up." Then, you know, he says that the tongue is the hardest of all things to be controlled. Oh, how much mischief our words do! Things have gone wrong with us, we are not feeling very well, some annoying customer has come in and upset us by her thoughtlessness, things were not right at home, the weather is very trying. Whatever it is, we are upset; and what do we do? We vent our unpleasant feelings in sharp words toward some one about us and near us, a quite innocent person, who is not in the least responsible for our condition. We say some little barbed word of sarcasm. We sneer at some little fault or failing. We try to hurt the

feelings of some one else. Where we ought to have brought love and kindness, we bring malice and hate. Perhaps we make an enemy out of some one who might have been a friend. We turn away from us, by the unkind word we speak, some one who perhaps needed our help and would have given us her confidence. We lose the opportunity of helping or even of saving a soul by our action.

How much injury we do with the little unkind things we say about one another, some little tittle-tattle which we pass on! Possibly part of it is true. It might even be that the whole of it is true, but we told it not for any purpose of preventing a wrong, of reforming an evil, but out of pure malice or thoughtlessness; malice, merely because we like to do a bit of mischief, just as a boy likes to break a window or do some harm for the fun of the thing; or thoughtlessness, because we do not really realise the injury which our words might do. It is a bright thing to say, it will make so and so listen, amuse so and so; and so it is said. I think it was Harriet Moore, or perhaps it was Mrs. Hemans—I cannot say which, but a famous English woman,—who is said to have had this custom: When any one came to her with an unkind story about some one else, she would instantly put on her bonnet, and say: "Come, my dear, we will go at once and see so and so," —the person about whom the story was told,—"and tell her, so as to get this straight." Few people would wish to retail gossip or tell malicious little stories to one who did like that, and how much more kindliness and love would come into our lives and the lives of those about us if we were as eager to tell the nice things

and the kind things as many of us seem to be to tell the little spiteful or unkindly things.

I might mention many more of these little foxes—peevishness, irritability, a host more of them, some of which seem to us often to be closely connected with our physical infirmities. I think that in most cases, however, their connection with our physical infirmities is that we give them a home there and coddle them up and pet them, and then let them get out to destroy our tender vines and the tender vines of those about us. You could, doubtless, name many more of these little foxes than I have done. Take this verse and think of it.

But how are we going to get rid of all these little foxes? We read these words in the lesson this afternoon: "If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God." Now, that does not refer to a rising after death: it refers to a rising in this life, to a rising out of malice and hatred and pettiness and meanness into the glorious kingdom of the love of God. Open your hearts and let the sunshine of God's love stream in. Do you know how, in modern medical practice, they do just that thing with our homes and our houses? The dark, stuffy little rooms into which God's sunshine and the fresh air cannot come are hot-houses of disease. All sorts of germs breed in them. The mind and heart that shuts itself in, closes all its windows, won't let the sunshine of God's love and the breath of His gracious Spirit enter in: that mind and heart are full of all sorts of germs of disease. That is where the little foxes grow and thrive. People like that, who shut

themselves up in that way, are full of all sorts of suspicions: they see all the evil that is about them. They develop a positive ingenuity for finding evil in the hearts and lives of those about them. They do not seem to think that there is any good, and if they see a good thing they think it must be done for a bad motive. I know there is much evil all about with which you come in contact in your lives; but there is so much love, so much goodness, so much kindness in the world! God is here and very close at hand. The New Testament, with its wonderful story of God incarnate in man, Jesus Christ walking about here upon earth and healing sickness and doing deeds of love, was meant to make you and me understand that God is all the time right here about us, walking among us, waiting to be recognised and known, and that God is ready to give you and me a great power to heal sick souls, uplift maimed and broken lives; that He has given it to us, His children, if we would but use it.

Lately people have found in Egypt a good many ancient writings, some of which profess to be the Sayings of Jesus, which are not in the Bible. Christians in the early days loved to dwell upon the principles which Jesus taught, and try to find new applications for them. I remember one of those little sayings, to the effect that if you only turn up a stone, underneath it you will find God. "Seek and ye shall find."

There is one story of Jesus which is told in the East —I do not suppose it is history, but I like it, because it expresses just that power which Jesus had and which every child of God ought also to display, of seeing and

finding good in all about. Jesus and His disciples came one evening to a little town. The disciples dispersed to search for a place to lodge and food to eat, and Jesus, walking alone, came to a group of the townsfolk gathered about a dead dog, lying in the street. Now the dogs there, you know, are the scavengers. They belong to no one. They are outcasts and unclean. And one said: "Aha, the thief is dead." And another answered: "Yes, the foul brute! How could God have made such uncleanness!" And another said: "Faugh, he stinks. Let 's get away from here." And another, kicking him with his foot, said: "Worthless carrion, fit only to die and rot! There is nothing good about the whole tribe of you." Then they heard the gentle voice of the stranger who had approached them unawares saying: "And yet his teeth are whiter than the whitest pearls." So they turned and looked at Him for a moment, and then one said: "Surely this must be that Jesus of Nazareth, of whom we have heard, for none but He could see good even in a dead dog." There is the Divine power: to see the good that is about you, to find it, express it, bring it out. Why, to do that is to create good.

I have spoken to you of these very little things, the little foxes. Some of you, I doubt not, dream of the great things of life. You like to read the novels and stories that tell of some beautiful heroine in high place, and the things which she said and did. You fancy that such a life would be a grand one, and perhaps you think you could do much good in such a life as that. I think God knows best our capacities and

our abilities. Sometimes He puts us in a place to test us and prepare us for something bigger, and sometimes the place which we hold now, all unknown to ourselves, is the really great and important place. No one can ever tell how far-reaching his words or his deeds may be. The private soldier on sentry duty may, by his carelessness, bring about the destruction of a whole army, or, by his diligence and faithfulness, secure its safety and its ultimate victory. Of all the lives which have touched mine for good, few have done more for me than the life of a very modest and unknown woman in a town where I once lived. I knew there many learned people, many who have won distinction, some who occupy to-day the highest places in the nation's counsels, but no one in all that town did for me what that little dressmaker did.

PART II

THE SOCIAL TEACHING OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST

A DINNER PARTY

St. Luke xiv., 1–23

JESUS was invited by one of the social and religious leaders of Jerusalem to a dinner party, very much as any religious or social reformer, much talked of at the moment, might be invited to-day. The object of such an invitation is mainly one of curiosity, to observe at close range the man who is attracting attention, to have an opportunity to see him, to observe him apart from his own surroundings, his own chosen environment. There is something amusing and interesting in this, possibly something instructive, but the motive of the greater part of the guests on such an occasion is one merely of curiosity; their attitude towards the man invited to be looked at or heard is too often contemptuous and disdainful, as toward one not in our set, who has no knowledge of our modes of thought and conditions of life, and who on that account is an alien and an inferior. We are familiar with Jesus' miracles of healing among the sick and suffering; we know Him in His association with fishermen, with labourers, with publicans and sinners; we have read His sermons and His parables to the multitudes, the story of His trial by the high

priest and before Pilate. In all these relations Jesus is familiar to us. I venture to think that He is quite unfamiliar to us as a guest in the fashionable social circles of His day.

We have, in the fourteenth chapter of St. Luke's Gospel, a most curiously interesting and instructive account of His attitude and teachings in precisely such surroundings. We obtain a glimpse of the motives that moved the guests at that dinner. We hear the conversations that took place, the questions that were asked Jesus and His answers, and we see the hypocrisy and sham religion of that society. The chapter is headed thus: "And it happened when He went into the house of one of the leaders of the Pharisees to dine on a Sabbath day, their object being to observe Him." Then follows a description of what took place. First of all there appeared before Him a sick man, sick with dropsy. The Pharisees were going to have an opportunity of seeing two things: how He healed sick people and how He kept the law. But the tables were somewhat turned on them, when Jesus asked them for their opinion. They were doctors of the law. What should He do? Was it lawful for Him to heal on the Sabbath day? Now their object was not to find the truth, nor to assist Him in doing what was right, but merely to test Him. It was a distinctly hostile attitude, not a friendly but an unfriendly test; they would like to trip Him up if they could. No one answered. So He took the man and healed him and let him go, and then, turning on them, quoted their own Scriptures and applied to that case the principle contained in

them. In the Sabbath law in the Pentateuch it was provided that if a man's cattle were in danger or discomfort, as if an ox or an ass had fallen into a pit, one should relieve him on the Sabbath day. The principle of the Sabbath was rest from labour for those who toiled, man or beast alike. It was humanitarian and its humanitarianism called for relief of pain or suffering. The application was unanswerable, but just on that account it did not, presumably, increase the kindly feeling of the Pharisees toward this man, not of their own set, who, by His enunciation of that principle and its application, had practically condemned them.

Just then dinner was announced and they began to take their places. The teaching of the Jewish law, which these men professed to make their standard of life, was that a man should love his neighbour as himself. Any such standard of life forbids mere self-seeking. No man can honestly profess such a standard and then seek to make himself the first in everything. He is bound to do for his neighbour just as much as for himself. Each of these men wanted to be counted honourable. Each wanted to have position, to be respected of his fellows. His concern was not that his fellows should have position, respect, and honour, but that he should have it. It is the common struggle for precedence, which, in some form or another, shows itself in every worldly society. But here was precisely the point: this society professed not to be worldly, but to be based on religious principles, to recognise a higher law than the law of get-what-you-can-for-yourself. Manifestly the pretence, in their

social relations at least, was a false one. The bulk of those present were not concerned with what they could do to promote the pleasure or the social well-being of some one else, to give honour to another; they were eager to promote their own social well-being, to secure honour for themselves. It was necessary to find a place for Jesus, inasmuch as He was the guest whom they all wished to see and to hear. A suitable place must be found for Him, and it became necessary for the host to ask one of his guests to make place for Him. Then it was necessary to make room for this guest, by changing the place of some one else, and so a certain shifting took place, and naturally the conversation fell upon the matter of precedence. How should it be determined? Whose right was it to occupy such a place? Who was the better man? How are we to count such things? By and bye they asked the social reformer, their guest, what His idea was, and He replied, as it were in their own language, but with a little irony, one cannot but think. Surely honour does not come from that which a man does for himself, or seeks for himself, but from the respect which others show toward him. It is no honour to any man greedily to seize the best place for himself. It is an honour to have the best place assigned to him because of the respect and veneration in which others hold him. So His answer was, in proverbial or half proverbial fashion: "When you are invited by any man to a wedding feast, do not seat yourself in the chief place, lest some one of higher rank than you be invited by your host, and he that invited you both come and say to you: Give place to this man; and then

you begin with shame to take the lowest place. But when you are invited go and sit down at the lowest place, so that when he who invited you comes he may say to you: My friend, come up higher. Then you shall have honour in the sight of all that are dining with you, because every one that exalteth himself shall be humbled and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted."

Next they fell a-talking about the persons to be invited to their houses. Their religion enjoined hospitality. It was a good deed, acceptable to God, when one entertained a stranger, one who was in need, who had no home. There is an oriental phrase, which one hears to-day in the East, "My house is yours"; everything is, as it were, placed at the disposal of the guest. There is a certain piety, the recognition of a religious obligation, in this service of another with one's house and goods. Maintaining the customs of an earlier and more primitive age, the Jews of our Lord's time counted hospitality among the sacred duties of religion. To extend hospitality was pleasing in God's sight; but the spirit that lay behind the injunction to hospitality, which made hospitality a religious act, acceptable in the sight of God, was perverted in such wealthy society as that of the Pharisees with whom our Lord was feasting. No real hospitality was shown in their feasts. They were merely society functions. When they turned to our Lord and asked Him, as the result of the conversation which they had been holding among themselves, what was the right thing to do about inviting guests, who were the right people to be asked, our Lord

recurred to the foundation principles of hospitality, which they recognised as binding, answering still with something of the same irony as before. They thought that every good deed would be rewarded; and as it is manifest that all good deeds are not rewarded here on earth, therefore those good deeds which are not rewarded here shall be rewarded hereafter, in the kingdom that is to come. Jesus says to them: "When you give a supper or a dinner, do not invite your friends, your kinsfolk, or your rich neighbours." That is not hospitality: it is done for your own pleasure or to obtain invitations in return for yourself, to secure a better social rank for yourself. Such a deed has its reward in the return invitation. There is nothing of religion in it, and it receives no reward in the kingdom of heaven, because those whom you invite will invite you in return; and that will be your reward. "But when you give an entertainment, invite the poor, the maimed, the lame, the blind, and you shall be blessed, because they cannot invite you in return, for you shall be repaid in the resurrection of the righteous."

One pompous old Pharisee who was present, one of those self-satisfied, righteous men who are always quite sure that they and their religion and their doings are entirely satisfactory, and that they are going to be social and religious leaders in the kingdom of heaven, just as they are here, hearing Him speak of the resurrection of the righteous in connection with a supper or feast, at once remarked, with all the unction of self-satisfied godliness: "Blessed is he who shall eat bread in the kingdom of God." He was sure that

he and his friends were those for whom the feast of heaven was spread. Then our Lord told the parable of the supper.

I have analysed at some length the conversation and the happenings of this dinner party as related to Jesus, following St. Luke's narrative. In details the social relations of that Pharisaic good society of Jerusalem are different from the social relations of our good society, but the principle underlying both is much the same. You and I live in the midst of a worldly society, which has largely converted the Church to its own worldliness. We profess certain fundamental tenets of religion; the great bulk of us who profess them do not pretend to practise them when it comes to our social or society relations to our fellow-men. Religion is not primarily a matter of doctrine, of ritual, or of sacrament. It is a matter of life, it is the carrying out in the social, as well as in every other relation of life, of the fundamental principles which Jesus Christ came to make vital among men.

Those of you who receive the Communion make, in the words of the priest who speaks for you, this pledge of yourselves to God: "Here we offer and present unto Thee, O Lord, our selves, our souls and bodies, to be a reasonable, holy, and living sacrifice unto Thee." It is the fundamental Christian conception of life that our lives cannot be lived for ourselves, that all we are and all we have are devoted to God in the service of our fellow-beings. Our social relations are included in this contract as well as everything else. The person who enters into social relations,

who seeks acquaintance and friendship, who gives and takes invitations, for no other purpose than social promotion, is precisely to that extent a hypocrite and an unbeliever; he makes a profession of one thing and does another, because there is no real belief in his heart; and it may be added that such an attitude deprives the person who assumes it of the very best that there is in life, of the realities of life, true friendship, true love, the beauty and the joy of service with and for those about us. Ambition is an entirely legitimate thing, from the Christian standpoint, provided that ambition be transmuted from the purely selfish desire to achieve power or place for one's own amusement or glory, into the desire to acquire position or place or wealth so as to do something, in some way to better, improve, or help the world, or some of those who are in it. It is an honourable thing to desire to be Mayor of this city, or Governor of this State, or President of the United States, and to strive with all one's energy to gain those offices, if it be done because the man believes that he has the capacity and power thus to serve his fellows and is filled with the desire to do so. There are legitimate social ambitions. Each man and each woman should desire the best,—the highest culture, the highest refinement; and each father and each mother should desire for their children the best environment. But that is a very different thing from the cold-blooded, hypocritical calculation of the person who makes or pretends to make friendships for the sake of social advancement and social recognition, who for social advancement condones fraud and is blind to immorality, who is

proud to associate with rich scoundrels and immoral divorcees, or to claim acquaintance with them, to invite and be invited by them for the sake of social position. Very little in life is more contemptible than the conduct of men and women trying to rise, as they conceive it, in the social scale, who cast off old friends, or deny the ties of relationship, because such friendships and relationships would hinder them in their climbing; but worst and most contemptible of all, because it is an abuse of religion, a profanation of the most sacred relations of life, is the conduct of those who seek membership in churches which they esteem fashionable and become communicants there because such membership is the correct thing. Their case is similar to that of Ananias and Sapphira; their lies to God kill their souls. With the mere abuses of society as society, with its selfishness and self-seeking, with its immorality, I have nothing to do; but only with the attitude of those who, professing the religion of Jesus Christ, deny that profession in their social relations.

Our Lord in His talk that afternoon laid down the fundamental law of Christian society. Seek not merely nor first your own welfare, your own promotion and advancement. As you recognise the rights and the virtues of others, as you give them place, as you help those who are unsuccessful, unfortunate, unfriended, you show yourself a follower of Christ. When you seek for yourself only, you are His enemy and betrayer. He indicated in His talk that Sunday afternoon, among those worldly and hypocritical men, the true attitude of the possessor of wealth or oppor-

tunity. He who, having wealth, a beautiful house, picture galleries and the like, yachts, carriages, automobiles, regards them as his own, to be used just for his own pleasure, for the promotion of his social position, the satisfaction of selfish social ambition, has failed to recognise the fundamental principle of the stewardship of wealth.

I heard a short time since the latter story of a woman I once knew who, after an unfortunate marriage, had been left to struggle for herself. She opened a boarding-house in a college town. It was very successful. By and bye she inherited a large house in the country; and to that house go to-day, for nothing or for a small sum, working girls, tired clerks, and all sorts of people who need rest and refreshment. Here is a woman of small means who has entered into the Saviour's conception of hospitality as religious service. What would happen if Christian men and women who possess the means were, in their various degrees, to regard their houses, their gardens, their galleries, their yachts, their automobiles and carriages as a personal trust from God, of which they are the stewards?

But it is not merely the wealthy for whom our Lord's parables are intended. Their number is very small. The social teaching of this parable applies to all of us. It is for the men and the women of small means as well as for the men and women of large means. It has to deal with principles which concern social relations in general; and there are, unfortunately, plenty of people of small means who devote their all to clothing themselves so as to keep up with their

society or the society which they aspire to, whose invitations and acceptances of invitations and whose entire social relationship is based on that principle of self-seeking which fell under our Lord's condemnation. All about us are those less fortunate than ourselves. To these we owe a social duty, to give to them what we have that is better than what they have, if it be but our higher grace and higher culture. Merely to strive to win for ourselves a place in a social circle above us, or to maintain our place in the social circle which we call our own, is to renounce the fundamental doctrines of Christianity as applied to the social relations of life.

The attitude of at least a large part of the respectable men and women who constitute the Church is set forth in the parable which our Lord told the guests at that dinner party in answer to the complaisant utterances of the pompous, contented Pharisee. The latter made use of the common phraseology of his day, when he spoke of the kingdom of God as a feasting in heaven. Our Lord accepted the phraseology and built His parable upon it. You have accepted the invitation to the kingdom of heaven. You are among the invited guests, those who profess the true religion. You expect a place with God in due time in His kingdom. Then comes the call that the feast is ready, you are bidden to come; and you all with one accord begin to make excuse. I have other things that are more important: I am buying a piece of ground and I must complete the sale; I am buying a yoke of oxen and I must go and test them; my domestic relations require my present attention. All these things are

important in themselves. The point is the rank which you assign them. You profess to rate the spiritual life first; but in fact your real life is the material life. You live for yourselves, for your own advantage, your own comfort, your own pleasure. The spiritual realities are not real to you; they are something vague and remote, belonging merely to your church services and your professions of faith. This is largely true to-day in our churches, just as it was true in the strictest and legally most scrupulous circles of the Jews in the time of our Lord. "Many are called but few are chosen" is a literal truth which we are too apt to interpret away. To be a member of the Church, to make profession of religion, to conform in certain regards to the law, that it is with which the bulk of us are content and which we believe to be Christianity. But that is not Christianity at all, and it is precisely to those who stand in this position that this parable speaks. Jesus appears in society to-day as among the Pharisees, and society treats Him now much as it did then.

Carlyle was a rough man and he spoke roughly many a home truth. They tell of him that on one occasion a distinguished woman, holding a high position in the respectable society of the English upper classes, expressed in his presence her surprise that the Jews should have renounced and crucified Jesus Christ. "Madam," he said, "if He were to appear in your circle to-day, just as He appeared in old Judæa, poor, unlettered, untutored, without social position and proper introductions, you would ignore Him. You would deny Him and very probably you would hound

Him to death precisely as the Jews did Jesus Christ." This is largely true. In fact Jesus is here among us, in the society in which we move, in the men and women who make appeals for something higher and nobler, for a friendship and love that are real and not fictitious, for social relations which make for the development of the spiritual and the ideal, for the uplift of the weak and the neglected. Ninety-nine out of every hundred of us count such persons anarchists, socialists, dreamers, fools, enemies of society, precisely as the Pharisees did Jesus and for the same reason. Jesus is here among us in another form, as He Himself has taught us, in the poor, the sick, the unhappy, the unfortunate, the degraded. He is here in them because whoever really gives to them of himself, in and through that sacrifice of himself in love attains to the sight and knowledge of God, present here among men.

Ah well, much of what I have said will sound to some of you very revolutionary. Yes, the most revolutionary book that was ever written is the life of Jesus Christ. The most revolutionary teacher that ever lived was Jesus Christ. The most profound revolution that can take place in the heart of any man is that which takes place when he has found Jesus Christ in very truth and come to own Him really as his Saviour,—when he has accepted the life of Jesus as his own, not in outward profession merely, but in the actual aim and effort of his daily life.

A GOOD NEGRO

St. Luke x., 36.: Which of these three, thinkest thou, became neighbour to him that fell among the thieves?

A JEWISH theologian demanded from our Lord an answer to the great school question: "What shall a man do to inherit eternal life?" Jesus asked him in turn, as one skilled in theology: "What is written in the Law?" The theologian answered Him in that admirable summary of the Law which we use in our Communion service: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind; and thy neighbour as thyself." The first part of this, you will remember, is taken from the 6th chapter of Deuteronomy, the 5th verse; the last part, "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself," occurs in the 18th verse of the 19th chapter of the Book of Leviticus. Our Lord replied substantially: "That is sound doctrine: you have answered aright. Do this and you shall live." So far the theologian had been put in the wrong, as it were. He could find no fault with Jesus' answer. In fact, Jesus seemed to have adopted the theologian's answer as His own. Anxious to set himself right, the theologian then

asked Jesus the test question: "And who is my neighbour?" Now you will observe that in the connection in which the command, "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself," is found in Leviticus, it applies properly only to the people of Israel. It expresses the duty of Israelite towards Israelite. "Thou shalt not avenge, nor bear any grudge against the children of thy people, but thou shalt love thy neighbour," that is, thy fellow-Israelite, "as thyself." To you and me this might seem sufficiently narrow, and in point of fact a fundamental fault of the religion of Israel has been the narrowness of its point of view. It is, from our standpoint, patriotism rather than religion, and it is precisely the adherence to this narrow national and racial religion, this Chauvinism, which has made the Jew an alien among the nations, hating and hated wherever he abides, his hand against all and their hand against him; because his standpoint is that his obligation toward his neighbour is confined to his own people. The standard of his relationship toward them may be a lofty standard, but he does not recognise a similar obligation toward those outside of his own race.

In our Lord's day the people of Israel were divided into two parts, the Samaritans and the Jews. The former had their temple at Gerizzim, by the side of Shechem, the latter their temple at Jerusalem. Each of them recognised the same Law, the five books of Moses, which we have in our Bible to-day, and each cursed and denounced the other. So far from regarding his fellow-Israelites and fellow-believers of Samaria as neighbours, the Jew regarded them as

heretics and schismatics. His hatred toward them was more bitter than his hatred toward the outside heathen, and they entertained the same feeling toward him. But even within the Jewish church itself the Pharisees looked with contempt on the unlettered and ignorant multitude, who did not understand the niceties of the Law, and who did not observe all the minutiæ which the Pharisees had read into it and interpreted out of it. These common Jews, the bulk of the people, the Pharisees regarded as unclean, so that they could not associate with them, sit down in their houses, eat meat with them, and the like. Religion had become to the Jewish theologians not a vitalising, harmonising spirit, but a dry set of rules, an interpretation of formulæ. They had narrowed down the obligation of neighbourliness. Their emphasis was not on that which was really essential and fundamental in the Law, love. Their emphasis lay on the definition of the man to whom love was to be shown.

The parable with which our Lord answered the question, Who is my neighbour? turns the emphasis on that which is essential and fundamental—love. If there be real love there is no need of defining the word neighbour. Literally, as I have said, the Samaritans were Israelites as much as the Jews, but each called the other heretic and schismatic. Each belonged to Israel and each acknowledged the authority of the same sacred Law, but each anathematised and hated the other. Our Lord makes the hero of His parable the hated, heretical, and schismatic Samaritan, whom yet, under the literal terms of the Law, the

Pharisee was bound to love, not hate. I wish I could reproduce the setting of this parable. There are few weirder and more desolate spots on the world's surface than that road from Jerusalem to Jericho. Once over the Mount of Olives you leave vegetation and life behind you. The mountains are as barren as the face of the moon. There is no water, there is not a house from the time you leave the Apostles' Well, just at the foot of the Mount of Olives, until you reach Jericho. You descend almost 4000 feet. Leaving Jerusalem in mid-winter, with the snow on the ground, when you reach Jericho you may be in mid-summer, with palms and oranges growing all about you and the heat at mid-day almost intolerable. You are 1300 feet below the level of the sea, and the great weight of the air rests upon you like a pall; you are suffocated beneath an unseen blanket. Something of this oppression, this burden of the atmosphere, you begin to feel as you descend the road, long before you reach Jericho. This, with the absolute lifelessness of the wild and barren region through which that road passes, the glaring whiteness of the chalk rocks, that almost blinds you, the strange, fantastic, and unworldly shapes of the desolate mountain ridges and valleys about you exert a depressing effect upon your mind. It requires nerve to retain one's courage on that road, in presence of danger or difficulty. And that wild mountain region between Jerusalem and Jericho has always been a favourite resort of robbers. Because no one lives there, bandits have found it a fit place in which to ply their trade. At almost any period during the centuries the story of the poor fellow that fell

among thieves might well have been enacted there. It was because of the infamous reputation of this road for robbery that our Lord selected it as the place of His tale. The particular incident on which He bases His story may well have been an actual fact, known to every citizen of Jerusalem, and as such having a personal application. A poor fellow was robbed, beaten, stripped of his clothes, and left half dead on that inhospitable road, with no house near at hand—sure death to him unless some kindly traveller would take him up and carry him to Jerusalem or to Jericho. By and bye there came along a priest, symbol of the God-fearing, law-abiding citizen of Jerusalem. The very profession of his life was religion. He lived through and for religion. But he simply left the poor sufferer lying where he found him and hurried on. The Levite who followed him, and who was almost equally a type of the respectable, God-fearing, law-abiding citizen of Jerusalem, who above all men should know and fulfil the law of loving his neighbour as himself, did the same.

Now it is very easy to condemn the action or rather inaction of these two men. I think the ordinary reader does not understand their temptation, because he does not appreciate the conditions of that road. It was a dangerous place to pass through at the very best. Delay meant a considerable increase of that danger. The very condition of the man that lay there on the road was evidence of the presence in their immediate neighbourhood of a band of robbers, against whom neither priest nor Levite could defend himself. To pick up the man and carry him along

meant a retarded journey, with an increased chance of their own robbery. Each of them presumably had a donkey, on which he carried his bed, that is, his blankets, and a few personal effects, together with a jar of water. This beast he sometimes rode, sometimes he walked by his side. With him he could move rapidly and hence more readily escape the danger. If he stopped and took up the wounded man, first of necessity binding up his wounds, he could only go forward very slowly. Now why should he expose himself to such risk? It was almost certain that within a couple of hours at the very most a caravan would come along, to which delay would mean no danger, in which were plenty of beasts who could carry the man, and plenty of men who could easily lift him up and who could and would undoubtedly care for him. As a matter of simple, common sense, why should he expose his life and his goods for this man, about whom he knew nothing, when within two or three hours at the outside others would undoubtedly be passing who could and would take care of him very much better than he could? You must not think of the priest and Levite as wantonly bad men. Put yourself in their place. What would you do under such circumstances, and what do you do under circumstances which are in principle identical? This is precisely what our Lord meant us to do with the parable, to apply it to ourselves.

Permit me to tell you a story out of my own experience. I was a little boy, in an agony of pain, lying by the roadside, on the outskirts of the New England town of Great Barrington. I had been thrown from

my horse. My ankle had been dislocated. I could not stand nor walk. My horse had run away and I was a mile or so from my home. It was toward the latter end of the afternoon. By and bye a respectable, well-to-do farmer, a godly man and one of the pillars of the church, I make no doubt, came driving by on his way out of the town back to his home on the Egremont Plains. He stopped and looked at me, but when asked to turn his waggon around and take me back to my home in the town, he refused. Somebody would be coming along from the other direction before long and would take me in; he could not stop. Two or three of these good farmers treated me in this way. I remember especially one of them who was quite inquisitive. He had never seen a foot twisted around at right angles to its proper position, as mine was, and he was interested in examining it; so he handled and squeezed it, causing me exquisite torture, while I let him do it, trying my best to bear it without a cry, in the hope that then he would pick me up and take me home. But it was the same old story. He had no time. Some one else would be coming pretty soon. Some one else did come pretty soon—two poor old coloured men in a ramshackle, broken-down rig, driving a broken-winded, rickety horse. They had quite as far to go as those farmers. They were not respectable and godly members of society. The Egremont farmers were much more nearly of my own class and my own religion, my own way of training, my own way of looking at life than those poor negroes. But I do not remember that it was necessary even to ask the latter for help. They seemed to sense my pain

and my need without words. They turned their old waggon around at once and took me in, and I have never forgotten, and I hope I never shall forget as long as I live, the tender sympathy which those poor old fellows showed: one of them driving his horse toward the town as fast as he could, so as to save me every moment of pain he might, and the other holding me as well as he could to save my foot from jarring, and trying to comfort me in all sorts of quaint and queer ways, calling me "honey," "poor little lamb," and the like.

Now which of those men do you think was neighbour to me? The godly and righteous, hard-working, well-to-do farmers from the Egremont Plain, or those two poor, miserable, forsaken coloured men for whom none of us had a good word?

In that story of the good Samaritan our Lord laid His finger upon the danger of our life. Our religion, our respectability, are apt to become fundamentally selfish. It is of ourselves we think. Our righteousness is for our own well-being. But beyond and above mere righteousness there is something which is the very heart of the universe, the very essence of God Almighty, and that is love. No man whose religion is centred upon himself, whose life means the promotion of his own well-being, has entered into the kingdom of God, to use Christ's frequent words, for the very atmosphere of that kingdom is love.

Now the man who, seeing a boy lying by the roadside suffering agonies, can be so wrapped up in himself and his own affairs and his own duties and responsibilities that he does not respond with sympathy to

his need, that the boy's suffering does not appeal to him as a thing which must be relieved, which he must care for at once, without regard to his own inconvenience, is a man who has not entered into the real spirit of the religion of Christ. So in our Lord's story the priest and the Levite, whose consideration of themselves was paramount, who in the presence of a suffering fellow-being could coldly and selfishly reason with regard to their own danger, their own inconvenience, their own rights, and the precise degree of their obligation, were men who had failed to grasp the fundamental thought of "loving their neighbour as themselves."

And now let us apply that for one moment to ourselves. It is precisely the attitude of the priest and Levite which I think I may safely say the bulk of professing Christian men and women take. You and I do not go down the road from Jerusalem to Jericho and find a man who has literally fallen among thieves. Our obligations of love present themselves in a different way, I fancy, but the principle is the same. I but repeat the experience of every rector of a parish when I say that the number of people who are actually ready to do work in a parish is small, out of all proportion to the number of professing Christians, or even to the number of communicants in that parish. Men and women who seem to the rector's eye to be in a position to render service in the work of the parish declare themselves quite unable to undertake such work. Possibly they recognise the need of the work, but it seems to them that some one else ought to do it and not they; and it is often precisely those who seem

best able to undertake the work of God who would leave it to others.

The same thing is true with regard to those professions which call for sacrifice and service. The ministry is not, as a rule, well-paid. First there is a long period of study and training which must be gone through. That is expensive. Then, after a man enters the ministry, the opportunities of large remuneration are small. You would think that, under the circumstances, the Church might call on those persons to whom a salary is not an absolute necessity, who have some means of their own, to enter the ministry. How large a number of young men enter the ministry from the ranks of the wealthy or well-to-do parishioners in any parish?

And how about the ministry of women? How many young women from similar families become deaconesses or nurses, or give themselves to mission work or whatever else of the same sort? The same thing which prevents them from answering this call, the inconvenience of it, the danger of it, the burden of it, affects the same classes when it comes to work of any sort. It appears to be the men and women who have to work the hardest for their daily bread who take up and do the work of the Church.

But the work of Christ is not confined to parish work, or the ministry, or deaconesses, or nurses, or missions. There is an immense work for betterment, for the uplift of our fellow-beings, calling for volunteers in this city of New York. It cries to us for contributions of our money, but above all it cries to us for our personal service. If you could stir one half of the Christian men and Christian women of this city

to actual love of Christ, showing itself in the service of their fellow-men, the existing conditions of evil would largely be remedied. Ask any man or any woman who is struggling to remedy some great wrong, to help those who are in need, what sort of assistance he receives from his fellow-Christians, and he will almost always tell you that it is very difficult to find workers who will really work, who will really recognise the obligation themselves to serve; and that of those who do engage in the work the average man or woman is apt to think that when he attends a committee meeting once a month he has done all that can be expected of him. Take the lists of the various benevolent societies and organisations in this city and run over them. You will find the same names appearing over and over again, for the simple reason that out of the great mass of Christian men and women there is such a very small proportion who are willing to accept the responsibilities and obligations of service, such a very small number who in practice show that love which counts personal pleasure and personal comfort as a small thing in comparison with the opportunity to serve one's fellows in need or trouble.

Ah well, it may be said, that is not the only way in which service is rendered. No, it is not. The best service of all is that which is rendered by one individual to another, quite outside of the lines of organisation and institution. I have spoken of the other only as a gauge, a test of conditions. We should not, in fact, need any such organisations or institutions if even the majority, perhaps even one third, of the members of our churches were full of the true spirit of love and

service. If, instead of asking the question: Who is my neighbour? How little am I compelled to do? What is my necessary obligation? we Christian men and women were really to ask: To whom can I show myself a neighbour? Where is there one whom I can help? there would be no need of orphan asylums, societies for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children, Child Labour Committees, and much more of the same sort. The conception of man's relation to life which Jesus taught was this: I am here to serve. What can I do? Jesus served His fellow-men with all His powers because He really loved, because He was the expression of the love of God; and whoever knows Jesus becomes on his part, in his degree, an expression of the love of God. The question to be asked, if you really wish to get to fundamentals, is not the question of the lawyer, the theologian of Jerusalem, Who is my neighbour, to whom do I owe an obligation? but, as Jesus summed it up in His story, Who is there that needs me, whom can I help, to whom can I be a neighbour? No man, the idea of whose religion is the saving of his own soul, has begun to grasp the idea of the religion of Jesus Christ, much less to know his Saviour. When a man is concerned with saving some one else, then only has he begun to enter into a knowledge of the religion of Christ; then only has he begun to know Jesus as his Saviour.

It is a good thing to be respectable; it is a good thing to have knowledge; it is a good thing to restrain and discipline oneself and keep one's passions and desires under control; it is a good thing to achieve success, to accomplish results in life; and it is a good

thing to pray, to go to church, to be a communicant; but, after all, that is not religion. In the Christian sense religion is love, the love of God and of our fellow-men, expressed in the character and the life of the believer.

Most of us are Church members. We are intelligent: we can read and write. We are refined. We are, if not rich, certainly not poor in the sense that we do not know where we are going to get our daily bread. We may not have all the things that some very rich people have, but we are prosperous, if not rich, from the point of view of the great bulk of men and women. How did we get those things? How did we achieve our present position? How much of what you are, of what you have, came from yourself? Why, your very physical well-being, the attributes of body which you have, are in almost all cases what you have inherited from your father and your mother. They are the result of careful training by others when you were little. You did not care for yourself when you were a baby. Your parents cared for you. You did not teach yourself. You were sent to school. All these good things were provided for you. You were brought up in the midst of decency and order and self-respect. Your prosperity, your well-being, your respectability are not something which you have achieved. There is not one out of fifty of us who has won even his religion for himself. What we have and what we are is largely the result of what others have done for us. On the foundations which others laid we have built something; but when we count the proportion of what we have done to what has been done for us in our

lives, I fancy that we shall find it quite insignificant. Then, who gave you these things? They are the gifts of God, and neither you nor I can plead our decency, our respectability as virtues in the sight of God. At the last what He will ask us is: What have you done with these gifts which I gave you? You were my favoured children to whom I gave these good things, that you might play the brother to these others who are lying wounded and suffering by the road on which you are travelling through life. Have you stopped to care for them, to share with them the good things which I gave you to give to them? To whom have you been a neighbour, loving him as yourself? That, I take it, is going to be the question asked us at the great day. There is not one of us to whom there have not come opportunities precisely such as came to the priest and Levite. Did you take the obligation? Are you full of love, eager to find some one whom you can help? Or have you been willing to avoid obligation, to say: Someone else is coming who can do it better than I? I will leave it to him. It is not my task. It would hinder and hamper me too much.

PALACES AND SLUMS

St. Luke xvi., 19–26

"ONCE upon a time there was a rich man, and he was dressed in purple and linen and feasted sumptuously every day; and a poor man named Lazarus used to be laid at his gate, covered with sores and begging to be fed from the crumbs of the rich man's table. Why, the very dogs used to come and lick his sores. And by and bye the poor man died and was carried away by angels up to Abraham's bosom. Then the rich man also died and was laid in the tomb; and in hell, being in torment, he lifted up his eyes and saw from afar Abraham, and Lazarus on his bosom. And he called aloud and said: 'Father Abraham, take pity on me and send Lazarus that he may dip the tip of his finger in water and cool down my tongue, for I am tortured in this flame.' But Abraham said: 'Child, remember that you received your good things in your lifetime and Lazarus on his part the evil things; but now here he is comforted and you are tortured; and beside all this, between us and you a great gulf is fixed, that they who would pass over from here to you may not, neither may they cross over to us from there.' 'Then I ask you, father,' said he, 'that you would send him to my father's house, for

I have five brethren, that he may tell them, so that they too do not come into this place of torment.' But Abraham said: 'They have Moses and the Prophets, let them hear them.' And he replied: 'Nay, father Abraham; but if one came to them from the dead they will repent.' Then Abraham said to him: 'If they do not hear Moses and the Prophets, neither will they be persuaded even though one should rise from the dead.'"

Just because you are so familiar with this parable I have read it over to you again in a literal translation, for the words with which we are too familiar sometimes fail to convey to us their full meaning. It is a very simple story wonderfully told. How the brief description of the two men brings out the difference in their lives! The one lived a life of luxury and ease, clothed in the best, his every meal a banquet. The other lived a life of squalor, loathsome to look at, covered with sores, his food what the rich man could not use and did not want, the refuse of his kitchen—a poor outcast, sunk so low, so vile to see, that his only real comrades were the dogs of the street. Like him they lived on the refuse from the rich man's table. He and they shared together. In the graphic words of our Lord, they "licked his sores."

And when these men died the rich man was buried in a costly tomb, but there was no tomb for the poor outcast. His worthless body was put out of the way so that it might not defile the town, and that was all, from man's side. But now begins the other side. The angels of God carried his soul away from that poor dishonoured body, up to the bosom of Abraham.

The rich man's body, well preserved, lay in its costly tomb, but the rich man's soul was in torment in the flames of hell. Hell consisted of two parts, separated by a great gulf. In the one part the souls of the damned were in torment, burned by a never-dying flame. Across the gulf, far away and dimly seen by them in their agony, was the abode of the blessed, the bosom of Abraham, where the true Israelites dwelt in paradise, the garden of joy and feasting, with the great heroes and patriarchs of their race, Abraham Isaac, and Jacob. And so this rich man in his torment beheld far away, in Abraham's bosom, Lazarus, the beggar that used to lie at his gate. He cannot yet forget his importance and the importance of his family. This poor beggar that was seems to him no better than a slave, who should be sent at his will to do him service, and so he calls out to Abraham to send down Lazarus to dip his fingers in the water and bring him drink, for he was bound among the flames and could not move. Then when he finds that this is impossible, he calls on him to send Lazarus to his father's house to warn his brothers; for Dives was not without natural affection. He would not have his brothers come into this torment. He was a man of a sort not uncommon, proud of his family, anxious that they should have the good things, both in this life and in the hereafter. But his affection was limited to them. It was that affection, strongly touched with pride and selfishness, which men and women, hard and selfish toward the outside world, often bear toward their family and those who in some way belong to them.

Now this parable is not intended to give us a picture of the next world. We are not to understand that there is actually a hell in which the tormented suffer in fire and brimstone, and that there is a paradise, separated by a great gulf from this place of torture. Our Lord is simply speaking to the people in their own language, so to speak, precisely as, when He speaks of the rising and setting of the sun, He is committing Himself to no astronomical theory. For the purposes of His teaching He takes their own conception of the next world. His description of that is valuable merely as showing us what the Jews of His day conceived to be the condition of the departed after this life. Our Lord is not teaching us what heaven and hell are like. Again, you are not to understand that this poor man was on earth a saint, a pious, holy man who bore unmerited misery with patience, whose soul was so purified by his trials that therefore he was taken unto Abraham's bosom. Lazarus is represented merely as an utterly miserable beggar, such as one may see to-day anywhere in the East, and as one used to see in the streets of our cities when some of us were young. There is no question of virtue or vice. It is simply a question of misery. Similarly, the rich man is not a glutton, as the heading of this chapter in our King James' Version has it. That is a misunderstanding of the very idea of the parable. It is not drunkenness or gluttony that our Lord is condemning. He shows us a rich man, who, having of the good things of this world a plenty, conceives of them as his own, which he may use for his own pleasure and his own amusement. It is to be

presumed that Dives paid his way in the church; that, according to the Hebrew law, he gave to the Lord his tithes, one tenth of his income. Evidently he was not uncharitable, in the ordinary sense which that word has unfortunately come to have among us. He was quite ready to give away what he did not want to a poor beggar. I suppose that Lazarus may have been one of many who lay at his door and were fed from the crumbs that fell from his table; for such men were rather glad to have a crowd of beggars at their gate. It enhanced their importance and their splendour, and so far from driving them away they really encouraged them to come and lie at their gates and eat of their leavings, which were of no use to them.

What, then, does the parable mean? You are all familiar with Lowell's poem of "Sir Launfal." That is another form of this same parable of Dives and Lazarus, only with Dives converted at the last. As, in his vision, Sir Launfal rides out of his castle to commence the search for the Holy Grail, he sees a leprous beggar by the gate, begging an alms for Christ's sweet sake. He throws him a purse of gold; but there is no love in the gift. It is not a gift given to a brother, but an alms thrown with averted head to a loathsome outcast, whose touch and whose very presence are an offence to his soul. Then turn to the last scene in that vision. Sir Launfal himself is poor. His life has been a failure. He has not brought back in triumph the Holy Grail. He has lost his castle and his lands, and men spurn him as a fool and a failure. Then, in his poverty and loneliness, he hears the same cry of the leper, begging an alms for Christ's sweet

sake, and as he shares with that loathsome outcast the poor crust and the cold water, which are all that he has, in that deed of true love, as of one brother toward another, he finds his Saviour. His eyes are opened, he knows the Christ, and enters into the kingdom of God.

What is condemned in this parable is not gluttony or drunkenness or sensuality; it is not wealth in itself. It is the man wrapped in luxury and self-enjoyment, whose heart is hard and selfish toward the miserable and needy, who, instead of conceiving of his wealth as the means of giving to them what they have not, uses it for his own pleasure and that of his family and a few chosen friends, content that the miserable beggar should live on the leavings of his feasts. On the other side we are shown the infinite pity and love of God; precisely that which our Lord sets forth in His stories of the kingdom of heaven in this same Gospel of St. Luke. The kingdom of heaven is like a man who had one hundred sheep and lost one. That one miserable lost sheep counts to him as more than all the ninety and nine. It is like the woman who had ten pieces of silver and lost one, and lights the candle and searches diligently through her house until she finds it, and then calls all her neighbours and friends to come and rejoice with her. It is like a father who had two sons, one of whom became an outcast. He descended to the lowest depths of degradation and infamy. He was fain to eat with the swine and fill his belly with the husks that were fed to them. But when he came home and his father saw him afar off, he ran and fell on his neck and kissed him; he ordered

him clothed in the best; he made a great feast to celebrate his return. He showed to him, as it would seem, an honour which he had never shown the son who had lived with him all those years, dutifully and diligently caring for his inheritance. It is a picture of God as Love, touched by misery and suffering, yearning over the sufferer and gathering Him into His bosom just because he has need.

Now the conditions of life which are pictured in this parable of Dives and Lazarus are enacted every day before our eyes here in this city of New York. On Fifth Avenue you see the houses of the rich. There live the men and women who are clothed in purple and fine linen, whose daily meals would be to the average working man a banquet, who spend each day upon their pleasures, their luxuries, more than the ordinary man can earn in many days. Down on the lower east side you find men and women crowded together in filthy and stifling quarters, poor, squalid, and dirty, some of them not knowing whence the money is coming to buy their daily bread, dying of consumption or other similar preventable diseases, because they have not the means to procure the necessary food to nourish their systems properly, or do not know how to take care of themselves or their little ones. These people that live on Fifth Avenue have their houses at Newport, Lenox, Mt. Desert, on Long Island, or on the Hudson, or at Tuxedo. If they are overtired with pleasure or business they may run off to Lakewood. If a cough develops or their nerves are worn they may take a trip to Asheville or to Florida, or in their yacht they may travel around the world.

These others who live on the lower east side must stifle and suffer when the hot waves come in summer. They must work in crowded rooms all day and sleep on fire-escapes or on the roofs or in the parks at night to get a breath of fresh air. Their babies die off in such weather, little children who could be saved if it were only possible to take them to Newport, to Tuxedo, or the like, if they could only be carried out to sea on a yacht, if they could only have the needed care and diet. The young men and young women who live in these homes work in crowded workshops; they develop the germs of tuberculosis, one gives it to another, and whole families are swept away, who might have been saved had it only been possible to take them out of their dark and sunless tenements and to give them a long period of rest, with nourishing, plain, country food and bright sunshine and fresh air.

Ah well, you say, these persons who live on Fifth Avenue, who have money and fine houses and live in luxury, they have worked for what they have or their fathers or grandfathers have worked for it. They have acquired it by self-denial, self-control, self-restraint, by diligent application, by superior intelligence and capacity, or by the same qualities in their parents who have bequeathed it to them. They are entitled to enjoy what they have won. The misery and squalor that you speak about are due to the shiftlessness and the self-indulgence and stupidity and the sin of those others who live in the slums,—of them or of their parents. To be sure there are individual cases where that is not the case, but in the bulk it is true. You have on the one side the prosperity, the

wealth which is the result of the application of certain social and moral virtues. You have on the other side the misery and degradation which are the result of moral and social vices. Moreover, you forget that it is precisely these rich men who give the money to support and maintain such hospitals as St. Luke's or Roosevelt, who furnish free pasteurised milk to babies, who give the fresh-air outings to such great numbers of children and poor women and shop girls, who build and maintain cottages and homes to which those afflicted with tuberculosis may be sent to secure precisely that fresh air, nourishing food, sunlight, and the like of which you speak.

Yes, that is perfectly true; and there are some among them who not only give the money for these things but who give themselves. But it is also true, and that is precisely what our Lord points out, that the great bulk of the people who have these things of which I have spoken give their gifts as the crumbs which fall from their table to the beggars who lie at their door. What they do not need and what they do not want, that they give. Like Sir Launfal they turn their heads aside and toss the leprous beggar a bag of gold. Those who have this world's goods above the average have a mighty burden of responsibility. However they have achieved wealth, whether by their industry, their ability, their skill, or by inheritance from those who have gone before them, in God's sight that wealth is theirs not to enjoy but to share. The very fact that it is stupidity and sin which have brought the dwellers of the slums into their present condition lays the greater burden on those who have

achieved success. It is theirs to show these others how, to take them by the hand, to lead them into better paths. Even if a man were to sell all his goods, as St. Paul says, and give them to the poor, and yet did not have charity, did not give himself, it would be worth nothing in the sight of God.

Now here is the life which many a virtuous family leads: The man is successful in business. He is engaged in a variety of great enterprises, the director of this railroad and of that bank or of some large industrial enterprise. Life is strenuous with him. His hours of business are relatively short, but the strain is great. He absolutely requires rest and change. He finds it in racing out with his automobile to his country home or to some inn; he finds it in a week's end at this place or that. One or two days in the week he spends the afternoon at golf. He goes to his club in the evening and plays billiards, or he goes out to dinner, to the theatre, the opera, or plays whist at home with a party of friends. All the time he can get off from business he needs and uses for wholesome recreation and amusement. His name is down as a donor to half a dozen charitable institutions. Possibly the amount which he gives to them and to the church of which he is a member is one tenth or even more than one tenth of his total income. If he gives that much he is likely to be counted an extremely generous man. He may be a director on the board of one or two charities and once a month or once a fortnight he attends their meetings. Once a year or so possibly he goes to look at the institution of which he is a trustee. He may be a warden or vestryman of a

church. He attends the meetings, helps make up the deficiency in this or that thing; he is generally in his place at church and helps to take up the alms, and is regular at communion. The women of the family, his wife and his daughters, see to it that the social status of the family is maintained, which is hard work and takes up much time. They are good and kindly towards their employees. They are members of some ladies' organisation in the church which they attend. Possibly during the time when they are in the city they take up some further work. They visit in some hospital, or on Sunday perhaps they go over to the Island to help sing in a choir and talk to the poor people there. They are on the ladies' association of some settlement or home. They attend meetings once a month, perhaps, when they are in town, and occasionally they go and visit the home or settlement in which they are interested.

Now we are inclined to commend such a life, by comparison, as worthy, virtuous, and religious. But in reality the life of those people, both men and women, is lived for themselves. The amount of money which they give, large as it is in bulk, is small in comparison with what they are able to give. The time which they devote to these things is not one tenth of the time which they devote to themselves. Do they do for the beggar who lies at their gates, for the slums which lie at their doors, that which it is within their power to do? Have they that tender pity and sympathy and love which makes them so yearn to relieve suffering and misery that they are not content to leave one stone unturned until it is removed?

In general the attitude of those of us who are prosperous, as the world counts prosperity, is that we have won it for ourselves; it is our money, our success. We would like to help these others, but after all our first obligation is toward ourselves and our own. We look toward those who are still more successful and better off than ourselves. We wish to keep up with them, we desire to obtain the same good things which they have. It is our right to do so and to use all our abilities to achieve that end; and these others—well we would like to do something for them. We will toss them a bag of gold, with our heads turned to one side, and hurry on as fast as we can to catch the others. It is their own fault after all that they are where they are. We are glad that there are men and women who are establishing institutions or undertaking work to make them better, but that is a special vocation. The bulk of men and women certainly cannot be expected to give their time to that. We must be kindly and loving and affectionate to those in our families and those about us, but outside of that it is better to do what charity we have to do by proxy, give to missions, hospitals, and the like; and because we take that attitude, what we give is after all only the crumbs which fall from our table. What one of us is there whose giving is a real sacrifice? We have our banquets, we have our comforts; our giving does not deprive us of them. It is only what is left over, what we do not need that we give away.

Now the attitude of God toward man is this: He does not ask whether it is our own fault that we are sinful and miserable. If we believe in the teaching of

Christianity, we believe that God "so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son." His heart yearns over men precisely because they are miserable and suffering, and it is Himself that He gives, His only begotten Son; and so behold Jesus, the only begotten Son of God, suffering with the suffering, poor with the poor, sharing with His brothers. There is one prayer which He taught us and which you and I say night and morning, which begins with the words "Our Father." It was the Israelites' idea that God was their Father and they were His children. But to our Lord all mankind are brothers. Very literally He means us to carry that out. We talk about believing in Him and about salvation through Jesus. There is no belief in Him and no salvation through Jesus until a man has entered into the spirit of Jesus. As God came down from heaven to take men into heaven, as He gave His only begotten Son, His very heart, that He might bring joy into the lives of the unhappy, virtue into the lives of the sinful, healing into the lives of the sick; so He expects us, to whom He has given, as it were, a heaven, not to stay in that heaven and enjoy ourselves there, but to open its doors to others, to come down out of it and gather them into it, to give them of our joy and virtue, of our health, and of our wealth.

Our parable means this: If there be men living in comfort, living at ease, living in prosperity, having good houses, fine things to eat and drink, doctors to heal their ills, music and art to uplift and elevate their thoughts, all the things which men count good for body, mind, and soul; and there be by them other men and women who have not these things and do

not know how to obtain them; and it appear that those who have these things have given to the others only their crumbs, that which they did not need nor miss, that they have not shared with them and been their brothers, then the former have played the part of Dives and their lot in the hereafter will be the lot of Dives, for they had their good things in this life. The man who has not found the joy of love and sacrifice is incapable of knowing God; he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.

The social conditions which exist in this city of New York—and I do not mean that New York is exceptional in this—are an exact reproduction of those conditions which our Lord so graphically depicted in the story of Dives and Lazarus. There are undoubtedly self-denying men and women among our prosperous and well-to-do classes who are not merely giving the beggar at their gate crumbs, but who are treating him as their brother, whom they must love as themselves; but taking our social conditions as a whole, that is not true. The conditions which prevail among us could not prevail if even the majority of the well-to-do men and women in our churches realised their obligation not to throw their crumbs to the beggar at their gate, but to lift him up, to heal his sores, to take him into their homes, to make him one of themselves. And because this is true, therefore the condemnation which our Lord uttered in this parable applies to the Christian society of this Christian city.

THE SERVANT IN THE HOUSE

St. Mark x., 44: And whosoever of you would be the chiefest, shall be servant of all.

THESE words of our Lord were uttered as the result of a controversy between His immediate followers with regard to leadership. As they were all on the way up to Jerusalem on that last journey, which was to end in Jesus' death, James and John, sons of Zebedee, or their mother—accounts are divergent,—asked Jesus to assign to them the seats of honour on His right hand and on His left in the kingdom He was about to establish. When the rest learned of this attempt, they were very angry and a general wrangle ensued, each one wishing to be the greatest in the kingdom.

Then Jesus set forth the principles of His kingdom, the precise opposite of the world conception: "Ye know that they which are accounted to rule over the Gentiles lord it over them; and their great ones exercise authority upon them. But so it shall not be among you, but whosoever would be great among you shall be your minister, and whosoever of you would be the chiefest shall be servant of all; for even the Son of Man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give His life a ransom for many."

From the beginning of the new kingdom that has been the law, the rule of the kingdom: He who is the best servant of all holds the chief place. The Gospels are full of this revolutionary teaching. A most graphic presentation of this idea is found in St. John's Gospel. When, at the last supper that they ever ate together, on the very eve of our Lord's death, the Apostles fell a-wrangling as to precedence, rank, dignity, Jesus took off His garments, girded Himself as a slave, took water, and commenced to perform the menial office of washing their feet. There can be absolutely no doubt as to what the practice of our King was, and equally no doubt as to the rule of the kingdom which He laid down to govern you and me.

Is that rule carried out in the society to which you and I belong? Or do we, while professing to be Christians, take what our Lord described as the method of the Gentiles, counting the man great who lords it over others? In practice I think we must agree that the latter is the case; that, whatever the Church may have done towards leavening the world, up to the present moment, in this respect, the leaven has not worked very far and we are still part of a very unleavened society; that, so far as those relations are concerned, society has contaminated the Church, and not the Church leavened society, so that the great body of Christians consider it compatible with their Christianity to call themselves Christians and yet conform to that anti-Christian rule of counting him greatest who lords it most; and, inasmuch as the individual members of the Church stand in this position, it follows almost as a consequence that the Church

itself, in its general relation to social conditions, holds the same attitude.

This attitude of the Church toward society is the theme of a profoundly significant play which was put on the boards a year or so ago entitled "The Servant in the House," which many of you may have seen. As I want to use the treatment of this theme in that play to illustrate what I have to say, I shall venture to give you, not an analysis of the play, but an outline of what it undertakes to present.

Of three brothers, who came from the plain working people stock of England, one entered the Church. He was enabled to do so by the work of his two brothers. It was their toil by means of which he secured an education. They remained illiterate labourers; he became a scholar and a gentleman. One of the brothers, the eldest, was lost sight of. His other brother, a rough, coarse fellow, had a wife who died, and, partly as a result of this, he fell into thoroughly bad habits. He was a common labourer, compelled to do work of a peculiarly offensive nature, cleaning sewers. His wife left him a daughter, whom the clergyman brother took and educated. The clergyman brother had married a wife, Martha. She was a good Churchwoman and determined to bring her husband up to her own high social standard. Her brother was a rich bishop. To this Martha the low-down brother, who drank and cleaned sewers and used coarse language and wore dirty clothes and was a rabid socialist, was a most objectionable attachment. He was some one to be kept out of sight and helped at a distance, on condition that he should efface him-

self, not to be acknowledged as a brother and taken into her house. His daughter, Mary, was not even allowed to know who her father was, much less to know him. She was to be brought up a lady. Martha separated her husband, the Church, from his brother, the working man, out of whom he had grown, on whose toil his education had depended and his church itself been built. Martha was respectable, godly, devoted to her husband, eager to raise him in the social scale, a pious and virtuous materialist. She is the hundreds of thousands of good women who manage our churches, who send missionaries to the heathen abroad and the slums at home, the while they are, by their materialism, by their being cumbered by the many things of this world and setting those things first,—material well-being, decency, and social propriety,—separating their husband, the Church, from his brother, the common working man. To Mary, the daughter of the working-man brother, whom Martha and her husband had adopted, these society things did not have the same importance, and she was continually making the strange blunder of seeing the souls of people and seeking friendship with them because of their souls and not because of their positions and their relations. She is singularly appealing, just because of what we might, perhaps, call her impracticableness. She is always ready to sit at the Master's feet wherever she finds Him, and she knows and recognises the divine voice, even if it speaks out of the mouth of a dirty labourer or a strangely attired foreigner.

Martha's husband, who is the Church, is uneasy in

his soul. The church services are beautiful; he goes faithfully, early in the morning, to administer the Sacrament; but the church in some way does not meet what his soul yearns for. The people are not there; he is not reaching them, and he feels himself, in a way which he can scarcely explain, tangled up in things which hamper and prevent alike his work and his own spiritual development. But Martha sees and feels none of all this, except only to be indignant that the people do not appreciate her husband, the refined and comfortable Church, as they ought.

At this time they are troubled in the rectory with offensive gases, which seem to be especially troublesome in the clergyman's study. So a man is sent for to clean the sewers, and that man is the common working man, the brother from whom the Church has become alienated and who is embittered against the Church, which he feels has grown out of him and now crushes him down.

At the same time a new butler has been engaged. Recommended by friends, supposed to be a Hindu from India, he comes to commence his service in the house on the same day that the sewer man comes. Just then, also, is expected the Bishop of Benares, who, the clergyman has just learned, is his long lost elder brother, a man who, according to report, has been doing a wonderful work for Christ in India. Proud of this, Martha has informed her brother, and so the rich and worldly Bishop, who has been more or less alienated from his sister because she married a man from the people, hastens to visit them, eager to meet the famous Bishop of Benares and to engage him in his plans for

church building, for the aggrandisement and enrichment of the Church and its hierarchy.

Then commences the entanglement. The semi-blindness of the groping, worldly Bishop, whose conception of his office is to secure money from rich men and rich women, money from anybody, to build, build, build,—great buildings, churches, colleges, hospitals, and the like, to provide rich endowments for the same, to enrich the Church and make it comfortable—this man's groping semi-blindness leads him into many embarrassments. He thinks the butler in his Indian robes to be the Bishop of Benares, the clergyman's brother, who he in fact is and yet is not, and confides to him his plans, and seeks to learn his secret. And then he hears from him, who is indeed both servant and master, how the great church that he has built is not a church built of stone and mortar, but "made up of the beating of human hearts, of the nameless music of men's souls," . . . "a looming mystery of many shapes and shadows, leaping sheer from floor to dome. The work of no ordinary builder!" . . .

"The pillars of it go up like the brawny trunks of heroes: the sweet human flesh of men and women is moulded about its bulwarks, strong, impregnable: the faces of little children laugh out from every corner-stone: the terrible spans and arches of it are the joined hands of comrades: and up in the heights and spaces there are inscribed the numberless musings of all the dreamers of the world. It is yet building—building and built upon. Sometimes the work goes forward in deep darkness: sometimes in blinding light: now beneath the burden of unutterable anguish: now to the

tune of a great laughter and heroic shouting like the cry of thunder. Sometimes, in the silence of the night-time, one may hear the tiny hammerings of the comrades at work up in the dome—the comrades that have climbed ahead."

This same groping blindness leads the worldly wise Bishop to mistake the working man in his soiled clothes for his brother the clergyman, and to sit down and eat at the table with him and with the Indian butler, whom he forces to join them, only to be shocked and outraged on discovering, finally, that he, the great dignitary of the Church, has been hobnobbing with a dirty, filthy, labouring man, a sewer cleaner, and with a barbarously dressed Hindu servant, and actually treating them as brothers!

The sewer-cleaner brother is at first very bitter, and both repulsive and repellent. He hates the Church and all for which it stands, the brother that looks down on him, and the society which controls that brother's life. But the things which he finds and sees in the clergyman's house, imperfect as it all is, his own working-man's daughter growing up so sweet and clean, to be a lady, this strange servant from a foreign land, with the wonderful words of the true missionary who has found God among men, make a profound impression upon him. He had come into the house with bitterness in his heart against all. Things begin to take on a new appearance. He finds that the offensive odours come from an evil condition in the sewers, and that beneath the Church itself lies the great source of all the difficulty,—an ancient cesspool and cemetery combined, in which the rotting bones of dead men and the refuse of

the present age have mingled together, finding no outlet. And now he has found his work: to clean out the sewers of corruption and discontent. It may mean disease and death, but that is his job.

On the other side, that touch of the Church with the brother in India, the race which he had despised, which he had governed and controlled but shut out from all social contact—the contact of the Church with that brother, all unknown yet as his brother, counted only as a servant, his butler, has taught the clergyman brother a new lesson of the brotherhood also of the labouring brother at home whom he had thought unfit for his society and his table. And so, when the labouring brother starts in on the dangerous task of cleaning the sewers of state and society, the clergyman brother throws off his clerical garments, his garb of caste, and prepares to go down with his brother, at every risk, to clear out the foulness beneath his beloved Church. Then brother clasps hands with brother in very truth. And Martha? Society wedded to the Church, our godly, pious society? Ah yes! At first she would have kept him back; but Martha is not all bad. It is just her lack of understanding, of perception. She had not seen nor understood what she had been doing. She had meant to raise her husband, and she had pulled him down. When it comes to the point of her husband's love and it is a question between surrendering her social concept or her husband, the Church of Christ, she is willing to stand by him and to bid him go and work with his brother.

And then all realise the spirit that has come upon

them and that this servant in the house, this Indian servant from that ancient nation whom they, the English, have exploited, whom they count their inferiors, is the revelation of Christ to them, or that he is in fact Christ to them, in the sense in which it is said, in the 25th chapter of St. Matthew's Gospel: "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me."

The play is English, in that it represents English conditions. The inferior race, to use a common but offensive term, is the people of Hindustan, and it is through them in the author's conception, through the service of the Church to them, that the Church is roused to a perception of true brotherhood and its obligation to minister. Were that to be translated literally into the conditions of American life, we should place the negro for the Indian and the servant in the house would appear as a coloured man. I am afraid that our race prejudice is so strong that, had it been so presented, the play, instead of meeting with a generally favourable reception, would have been overwhelmed by an outcry of indignation.

Ah! that is a great problem that we have to meet, the negro problem. I think that we often look at it wrong side foremost. God, we say, has given us this problem to solve, that we may find a way to make these people self-respecting, self-supporting. There is a great work that we have to do for these people. But has it ever occurred to you to turn it about the other way? God has given these people to us to teach *us* service, to teach *us* humility, to teach *us* brotherly

love, to bring *us* back to the foundation principles of the Gospel. And the solution of the negro problem is more important, not for its effect on them, but for its effect on us. In working out their salvation we shall work out our own. Through them Jesus, the meek and humble, Jesus, the Servant of servants, may come back to His people; for wherever the Church is roused to the sense of its obligation to go and serve, wherever it does not seek to lord it over men, but to gird itself as a slave and wash their feet, there the Church will see Christ revealed in the servant in its midst. Then we shall enter into a new conception of service and both the priests and the congregations in our churches, both our Marthas and our Marys, shall be owning as brothers and as fathers the coarse and humble toilers, whose bodies and souls alike are too often stained with muck and filth; and those brothers will find their place and their work in a Catholic Church of God. That is the dream of this little play, the vision which it presents.

I have heard it described as socialistic and I can imagine some even among you, my readers, saying in your hearts: Why, this is socialism. It is very strange how ignorantly that word is used. I believe the author of the play is a socialist; but, so far as the play itself is concerned, it might have been written by the most extreme individualist. What it represents is that which Christianity stands for: the recognition of one Father of all men, and of all men as brothers; the abolition of class distinctions, the abolition of race distinctions, so that there shall be neither "Greek nor Jew, circumcision nor uncircumcision, Barbarian, Scythian, bond nor free."

The Christian Church as such looks to the realisation in actual practice among men of the idea of the brotherhood of men, under one Father, God; and he has not entered into the true teaching of the Church, he is not made one with Christ, who does not believe in this and is not striving for it according to his ability. The conception of the Church is not self-gain, nor self-power, nor self-ease, but so to serve that we may give wealth and power to the community, that we may bring greater ease and comfort into the lives of all our fellows. Your service may be rendered to a few, to two or three or only one, or you may be rendering your service to a great number; but whatever the nature of your service, and whether it is rendered very humbly to only one, or manifestly to a great many, serve you must, if you would be a Christian. You have not entered into the real relation with Christ unless you have put service as the purpose of your life, unless you are striving to learn how to serve and to get the spirit and strength of God to serve. And the Church is not fulfilling its purpose in the world, it is not manifesting itself as the Body of Christ, unless the same spirit be in it.

And the Church is beginning to wake up to the necessity of bestirring itself, so far as the masses of the labouring people are concerned, that brother by whose toil its churches were created, whose discontent now forms the bad and dangerous gases that are affecting society and the state. At the last Lambeth Conference one of the topics of discussion was the present social unrest, the cause of the alienation of large masses of working men from the Church and of their search for the Church in labour unions and socialistic movements.

In the Lambeth Encyclical, issued in the name of the 243 "Archbishops, Bishops Metropolitan, and other Bishops of the Holy Catholic Church in full Communion with the Church of England," this passage occurs: "By the power of the truth which it carries and declares, the Church is constantly serving the cause of true progress. But it has a further duty—to be watchfully responsive to the opportunities of service which the movements of civil society provide. The democratic movement of our century presents one of these opportunities. Underlying it are ideals of brotherhood, liberty, and mutual justice and help. In those ideals we recognise the working of our Lord's teaching as to the inestimable value of every human being in the sight of God, and His special thought for the weak and the oppressed. These are practical truths proclaimed by the ancient prophets and enforced by our Lord with all the perfectness of His teaching and His life. We call upon the Church to consider how far and wherein it has departed from these truths. In so far as the democratic and industrial movement is animated by them and strives to procure for all, especially for the weaker, just treatment, and a real opportunity of living a true human life, we appeal to all Christians to co-operate actively with it. Only so can they hope to commend to the movement the Spirit of our Lord Jesus Christ, which is at once its true stimulus and its true corrective. Only so can they win for Him that allegiance which is the constant and enduring security for the hopes and progress of human society."

THE NEEDLE'S EYE

St. Mark x., 25: It is easier for a camel to go through a needle's eye, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God.

CERTAIN literalists have a way of interpreting the words of the Bible which yet enables them to explain away the sense. I remember some very ridiculous explanations which used to be given in all good faith by just such men of this proverb: that there was a gate at Damascus, or somewhere, no one knew precisely where, in some oriental city, which was known as the eye of a needle and which it was very hard for a loaded camel, or indeed for any camel to pass through; but then it was possible for a camel to go through it, if he were the right sort of a camel, and so it was possible for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God, if he were the right sort of a rich man.

It is strange how men will interpret with intense literalness some of our Lord's sayings, or certain doctrines of the Church, on which there seems to be but little emphasis, and then explain away the very plain statements on which He laid such emphasis that it seems clear He meant them to be fundamental. A man will insist on a literal belief in the Virgin birth as a condition of membership in the Church of Christ, the

kingdom of God, and then make that Church itself the Church of the rich, of whom our Lord said that they shall hardly enter into the kingdom. Now in reality the fundamental conditions of the kingdom of God, which should be also the fundamental conditions of membership in the Church of Christ, because the Church of Christ is meant to be the kingdom of God, are not doctrinal expressions, but a belief in the person of Jesus Christ, submission to the will of God as expressed in His life, an acceptance of His teaching as the rule of life, of His life as the pattern of our lives. The Jewish Church at the time of our Lord was the church of the well-to-do, the prosperous, educated Jews; and the same is true of the Church to-day in this country, as in England. It is, in fact, the Church of the prosperous, the educated, the rich. Men who occupy the position which our Lord occupied are not, as a rule, in the Church. The great mass of the men who work with their hands, the artisans, carpenters, stone-cutters, printers, and the like, seem to find their church in their labour unions, in their lodges. The Church of the Carpenter has become the Church to-day of the upper and upper-middle classes. Our clergy, whatever their origin, are educated to belong to the same class, trained in their manners and sympathies, in their etiquette and conventionalities, to associate with that class. We commonly put it that the poor people are alienated from the Church; in reality the Church is alienated from the poor people.

But this might be true, and yet this condition have been attained through a normal and proper course of development. I remember some years ago an

experiment made on Breton cattle. With sparse feed, in a rugged country, they were small and hardy. Their milk product was not as large as that of our better nourished cattle, but in proportion to the care and expense bestowed upon them the yield both of milk and beef was greater. Some of them were imported to this country, with an idea that if they gave so much under such poor conditions, with improved conditions they would give more. There was a natural process of development. With better food they grew bigger and required more care,—and gave less milk in proportion. If you transplant any animal or any plant from poorer to richer conditions, it will develop accordingly. The Church has been transplanted. Have we not a case of normal evolution? It began by being the Church of the poor and needy and humble. They found strength and hope and salvation in it, and that message was transplanted into another soil. The result is the Church which we have, the Church of the well-to-do and the prosperous. Has the Church drifted away from that which it was meant to be, or has there been a logical development from the Church of the poor to the Church of the rich, and is it any longer true that it is easier for a camel to go through a needle's eye, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God?

We know how riches have corrupted nations. The fall of Rome is an old and oft-told story. We pick up and read again the story of the downfall of the republic, we read of the conquest of the world and of the enormous wealth that poured into Rome, and of the men that through the spoil of provinces became rich beyond

the wildest dreams in which their fathers had indulged. We read of the gross extravagance that ensued, the corruption of the simple manners and the simple morals of an earlier time, and then we come to the struggles of ambitious young men to attain great power by means of wealth; we have the tyranny, the outrages, and misdeeds of a Sulla, a Clodius, and a Crassus, or the wild extravagance of a Cæsar, who sought to make himself, as you might say, a labour leader, the leader of the proletariat of Rome, spending money lavishly to win the hearts of the people, by making himself their patron, incurring huge debts, which he expected to pay off with the spoils of the provinces, which were the monopolies of those days. And as you read the tale you are reminded of our own time: the enormous wealth which individuals have accumulated, beyond the wildest dreams of possibilities or probabilities which our grandfathers ever had, their provinces the exploitation of special privileges. Here also, as in Rome, you behold the corruption of the simple manners and morals of a former time. The books and plays which set forth the conditions of life among our multimillionaires to-day give you a picture of the slums turned upside down: the gambling-hell and the brothel gilded with the veneer of wealth; fashionable dames making their houses resorts of gamblers; a conception of the family which is fundamentally immoral; marriages not contracted for companionship of soul, for partnership in the struggle of life, for the upbuilding of a sweet, wholesome home and the rearing and training of children; and, as a natural consequence of the fundamentally immoral attitude of the men and women

thus entering into the marriage relation, the easy dissolution of that tie. Men make love to their neighbours' wives as part of the form, one might say, of society, and married women receive attentions which a simpler and purer age would have pronounced in their very nature immoral. Church men and Church women, where themselves conforming to the outward rules of Christian morality, condone these things as a part of the natural condition of life. Moving in that society, sharing its forms and its associations, they count protest against its vices, or withdrawal from association with those who indulge in these evil doings as an impossible puritanism. Such books and plays are exaggerated, they show you but one side; but even so they exhibit a state of things which would have been absolutely impossible in decent society fifty years ago. There has been a terrible and dangerous relaxing of moral tone under the temptation of this great influx of wealth, of this creation of enormous fortunes.

And our political life has felt the same thing. Precisely as those Romans of the latter days of the republic went into politics to make vast fortunes, to use their positions as pro-consuls of this province or that, or their opportunities in the political struggles of the day, the proscriptions and confiscations, the sales at auction and the like, to amass great fortunes, and then with those fortunes further to corrupt the political life of the people in order to protect what they had gained, to enable them to get more wealth or to seize greater power; so these men, seeing the possibilities of vast wealth, to be acquired by means of special privileges,

have gone into political life to secure those special privileges. Manufacturers, gas companies, industrial enterprises, public service corporations, railroads, insurance companies, banks, have bought legislation, either to protect what they had or to get more. They have given, year after year, great sums to business managers, lobbyists, treasurers and chairmen of campaign committees, to be spent in corrupting the political life of the nation. There is much in that life to-day which is parallel with the political life of the last days of the Roman republic. We have our Clodiuses and Crassuses, we have our Cæsars, who corrupt the body politic with pledges and largess, to make themselves masters of the nation. When one abuses the other for his methods it is the pot calling the kettle black.

But it is not only Rome that fell through wealth. You who are familiar with Bible history know that in Samaria it was prosperity and wealth which preceded downfall, and the same was true of Jerusalem. Read your Prophets, Amos, Hosea, Isaiah, and Micah, and you see the same corruption of the social and political life through wealth which, on a larger scale, produced disaster at Rome. They foretold its result. They set forth certain destruction as the necessary consequence of the immorality, the sensuality and luxury, the avarice and greed of the great landowners and monopolists, and the follies of their wives and sons and daughters, who constituted the rich and prosperous society of that day.

What the Prophets applied to national life our Lord applies to individual life in His statement about wealth.

He demands as a condition of entrance into the kingdom a something which is diametrically opposed to the conception of wealth. You and I to-day are eagerly looking out to see in what place we can put our children where they will attain an assured income, where they can get the luxuries and comforts which perhaps we never had, or for which we strove with many hardships in our younger days, to obtain them at last when we were not able fully to enjoy or appreciate them. We do not want our children to undergo those same struggles; we want them to have ease and comfort. Our daughters we desire to see well married, and what we mean by a *good* marriage is, in ordinary parlance, not marriage with a man of high ideals, full of the spirit of service and sacrifice, who is giving his life to the service of his fellow men—we do not call it a good marriage that our daughter should share those hardships and those struggles. Even where we admire what such a man is doing, we do not wish our children to share his work. A good marriage means that our daughter shall marry a man who has money, that he may give her comforts and luxuries. We wish him to be respectable and decent, it is true, but essentially the "good" in our phrase, "a good marriage," refers to wealth. Men and women of means do not wish their sons to go into the hard occupations. Very few fathers and mothers who are well off encourage their sons to study for the ministry, for instance, or to take up other similar professions, which, while they afford a great opportunity for service to one's fellow men, involve hardship and small remuneration and much labor, a struggle

to make ends meet, a lack of comfort and of luxury. The very attitude which we take towards the future of our children shows the estimate which we put upon wealth.

But is it not true that Christianity, by improving the moral conditions, does of necessity bring an increase in wealth? Is not the great wealth of this country due to the liberty, the freedom, the opportunities, the law-abidingness, the industry, the thrift, the honesty, the intelligence and education which have come directly and indirectly through Christianity? You preachers often tell your congregations what Christianity has done for the world. You tell us about the work of missions, how they have lifted people out of savagery, how they have enabled them to build better houses, to dress better, how their physical conditions have been improved, how their wealth has been increased. You picture our present civilisation, with its knowledge and control of the forces of nature, and the consequent wealth that has accompanied that civilisation, as primarily due to Christianity. You tell us that if we will all recognise the principles of Christianity and live according to the teachings of Christ, this world shall be a paradise, where all will be wealthy. Ah! precisely that is what is taught: *all* shall be wealthy. The danger lies not in a great increase of wealth, provided that wealth can be evenly distributed, provided we progress steadily, and have an opportunity to become used to our changed conditions. The clothes which you and I wear, the houses which the plainest of us inhabit, the methods of locomotion, of which the poorest take advantage day by day, are

luxuries of which our forefathers never dreamed. Man rises above the beasts and into a higher spiritual life as he does not have to devote his whole time to the struggle for the food with which to fill his belly, when his whole enjoyment does not consist in eating and drinking and sleeping, in the indulgence of the merely physical and sensual part of his being, like the animals about him. If he is physically so worn out, if he is bodily so poorly fed that he is always weary, it is hard for him to think high thoughts, it is hard for the soul to thrive in such a body. There would be no danger, I take it, in the great increase in wealth which has come in our country, if that wealth were equally distributed. The amount which would fall to the lot of any one individual would not be such as to turn his head, to tempt him to idleness and luxury and extravagance.

The man or the woman who has great wealth almost invariably lives a selfish life. What they give is not themselves. They do not know the joy of service and sacrifice. Do you remember the incident of the rich men who threw their gifts into the temple treasury? To the simple apostles who stood about Jesus, to whom money meant a great deal, it seemed a noble and a wonderful thing that these men should come and cast in gifts in one lump greater than all they could earn in a year, or two years. And then there came along a poor widow, who put in the smallest amount which the law allowed, two mites, and our Lord turned their attention away from those rich men to this poor widow, telling them that she had given more than any of them, because she had given all she had. It is not what you give, it is what you have left. It is not the amount

of the gift, it is the service and sacrifice which are in the gift. The men or women who are not compelled to work up to the limit of their strength for their daily bread, who have perhaps all their time free and yet give but a paltry hour or two a week to the service of their fellow men, have given little in proportion to what they might give. The conception which a rich man must have of his goods is precisely that which our Lord held up before the rich young man who came running and knelt at his feet. Sell all you have and give to the poor. Your money, your time, your intelligence, your gifts of whatever sort they be, those you must conceive of as means by which you are to serve those who have not, who are in need of what you have. Now there is not one rich man out of a thousand, perhaps not one out of many thousands, who adopts that conception of the obligation of his wealth; and there is the danger of wealth to the individual.

But then wealth itself: is it wrong? Enormous wealth, what does it mean? How has a man gotten it? Of course if it is gotten through special privileges, the exploiting of the many for one's own advantage; if it is gotten by those devices and tricks for which some one has invented the admirable phrase of "law honesty," it stands in itself condemned. It is unrighteous. But suppose it to be free from such taint, what then? This you must take into consideration: has the man who has acquired it acquired it, as it were, incidentally, not making wealth his aim? Has it come to him in living a life of service? He is a great industrial captain, let us say. Has he regarded

his wonderful ability and the opportunity which God has given him as something by which to improve the conditions of those about him? Has he striven for that first and foremost, or for that equally with the profit for himself and his?

Now here is the point: we are children of one family. One may not take for himself much and leave little to the others. If he have the greater ability, it is his part to use that ability so that the others may share with him. In general you may say of any great accumulation of wealth in the hands of an individual: it is wrong; not necessarily, however, in the sense that the man has consciously done something which is wicked. Slave-holding was wrong. The man who held slaves certainly did not regard them as his brothers. He exploited the strength, the powers of his fellow men for his own comfort and convenience. He made them work for him. But in slave-holding countries the slave-holder is not necessarily a worse man than the others about him. The sense of right and wrong in this matter has not been developed in him. In this country we have passed beyond the days of slave-holding. The time will come when the same principle which abolished slavery will be applied still further. It is not right to exploit others for your own profit. You and they must profit and share together, otherwise there is no loving your brother as yourself.

But some one will say, That is socialism. It may be. Insofar as socialism is the effort to give equal opportunity, equal privilege, equal share to all, it is inspired by the Christian ideal. Christianity does not lay down

a programme and say: natural privileges and natural monopolies must be held by the community at large; mining rights, franchises, for gas and electricity, railroads, etc., must be the property of the state. That may or may not be the best way to attain the end desired. Christianity lays down the very simple principle of brotherhood: we are to love our brother as ourself. Surely, so long as there are the great differences which now exist between us, that has not been carried out. So long as men conceive of their powers and their opportunities as things by which they are to obtain for themselves more than others, and so long as they so use them, the Christian principle is not being applied in society, and those individuals have failed to enter into the spirit of the kingdom. The kingdom of God is not being realised among us. And here the Church is at fault. The Church has practically allied itself with wealth. The alienation from the Church of those very classes among whom our Lord lived, among whom and through whom He founded the Church, is dûe to the fact that the Church has in practice drifted away from the fundamental principles of our Lord's teaching. The Church itself does not believe, as it shows by its practice, our Lord's teaching. Stress needs to be laid to-day not on the literal meaning of doctrinal formulæ, but on the absolute literalness of our Lord's demand that men should live not for themselves alone, that we each of us should regard our fellows as brothers; which we certainly do not now do.

TAINTED MONEY

St. Luke xvi., 15: That which is highly esteemed among men is an abomination in the sight of God.

THE parable of the unjust steward pictures a wealthy man whose wealth consisted in agricultural holdings. He was a great landlord. Such a landlord was usually regarded, and very naturally, with dislike by his tenants. They worked hard with their hands; they lived poorly; it was a struggle to support their families with the best that they could do. And here is their landlord who does not, to all appearances, himself work, but simply profits by their work. While they toil, he amuses himself. What they gain from the land by hard labour they must share with him, and while, as the result of their best efforts, they eke out a bare existence, he lives in ease or luxury. Their personal acquaintance with him in many cases consists of little more than a glimpse once in a year or once in many years. Their dealings are with his agent; and it is only too apt to be the case that the agent's value is reckoned by the landlord according to the amount of rent which he exacts from the tenants. Anything that the tenant can do to relieve himself from these exactions is allowable in his sight. In fact his only protection, as he sees it, is the concealment, if possible,

of the amount of land cultivated by him and of the size of his crops, so that he may succeed in obtaining a larger share for himself. Any one who will assist him in doing this is his friend.

In our story the landlord learns that his agent is living extravagantly, wasting his goods. He at once calls upon him for a reckoning, as he cannot retain in his employment such an agent. Then comes that picturesque touch of the steward considering with himself the outlook. Thrown out of his lucrative and comfortable job, what is it possible for him to do? There is no chance of getting another similar place. He has never been trained to work with his hands; he is not able to dig. There is no way in which he can earn a living. The only outlook is dependence on the alms of others; and yet, holding the position which he has held, that seems to him a shameful life: "I cannot dig, to beg I am ashamed." Then flashes into his mind a shrewd device. He will make the tenants believe that he has been their friend, that his dismissal is a persecution because he has sought to help them. He calls them to him and gives the first his account. It proves that there are due 100 measures of oil. "Ah! there must be some mistake about that. Sit down at once and write 50: 100 measures of oil is quite too much for you to pay on your crop." The next man owes 100 measures of wheat. "That is a great deal, a great deal for a poor man who has worked hard to raise that wheat and who has a family to support: it does not leave you much. We will change it. Sit down at once and write 80." So it is with all. Every one is laid under obligation to him. All are led to suppose that

he is their friend, that he is trying to protect them from the exactions of an unjust and cruel landlord. When he is dismissed, as a matter of gratitude they will take care of him, and receive him into their houses. Then, with the liberty of a parable, the commendation of the shrewdness of this man is put into the mouth of the landlord himself. He commends the unrighteous steward for his shrewdness and this moral is drawn from the tale: "The children of this world are for their own generation wiser than the children of light." Then, addressing himself to his hearers, Jesus says: "I advise you to make to yourselves friends of the mammon of unrighteousness, that when it fail the friends that you have made by it may receive you into the everlasting habitations."

Does this mean that we are to use tainted money to do good with? That is practically the interpretation that some men have put upon it. You will find many who justify and encourage the acquisition of money by unrighteous means, by soliciting from the men who have made large fortunes in such ways contributions for charitable and benevolent purposes, by giving them places of honour on the boards which represent their institutions, and by attaching their names to the benevolences created or endowed by their large gifts. In answer to your protests they say: "Well, the man has not been convicted of crime. It is the business of the law, not my business, to determine whether he has done right or wrong, and as long as he is not convicted under the law it is not my part to pass judgment upon him. Moreover, however he has obtained this money, the purpose for which he is giving it

is a thoroughly good one. The money is going to be used in a good cause, and I believe that, even supposing him to have obtained it by methods which are illegitimate in the code of ethics, he is doing more good in this expenditure of money than he ever did harm in the acquisition of it."

When big sums are in question men are apt to become blind to the real moral principles. The law is at best a crude instrument. The man who does no more than live within the law is a pretty poor specimen. In the code of ethics there are things which cannot be reached by the law which are just as bad as the things which it condemns. In the ethical code the man who succeeds in depriving another of his property without exceeding the actual limits of legality is just as much a scoundrel as the man who enters your house and steals your goods. The man who, in some way or another, contrives to possess himself of the returns of the labour of others, taking advantage of legal provisions to make them slave and sweat that he may live in luxury, cannot be punished as a slave-holder under the laws of the land, but in the sight of God he is as much a slave-holder as the other. The principle is the same. He is grinding down and oppressing his brother, making him work not for the equal good of both but for himself only, leaving his brother just enough to keep body and soul together, while he himself lives at ease. It is not the business of the Christian to judge another in the sense of undertaking to cast him out, to condemn him as wickeder than himself, but it is his part and province to refuse to honour and applaud the man who, he is convinced, is doing evil, who is acquiring or has

acquired his property by evading the law or by oppressing or overreaching his fellows.

Take it on a small scale. Suppose a man came to you with five dollars, which you were convinced he had purloined from the pockets of other people, or which he had gained in gambling, by fleecing some poor fool. Suppose this man were to say to you: "Here is ten cents towards the college of which you are a trustee, here is twenty-five cents toward the Mission Board of which you are a member; here is five cents for the Law and Order League in which you are interested; here is ten cents for the hospital with which you are associated, and here is ten cents more for you to use at your discretion for any good purpose that you see fit." Would you pat that man on the back and say to him: "My dear sir, you may have gotten that money in a pretty bad way; I am not going to inquire about that; I have my own suspicions; but however you got it I want to say to you that you have done a noble thing. These gifts of yours are going to do great good, and your name shall be published in connection with these gifts, because your generosity ought to be known to the community. Yes, even if you did some harm in getting that money, you are doing enough good in the expenditure of it to more than make amends."

Now no one would say that to the man who only had five dollars which he had gotten in such a way and who yet gave more than one tenth of the whole amount for benevolent purposes; but it is precisely what people do say and do in the case of men who have amassed large fortunes in most questionable ways and who contribute very often not even a tenth of it for such

charitable and benevolent purposes. The sums look so large that they daze men, and so good men and Churchmen have helped to promote the unrighteous acquisition of mammon, have helped to corrupt the moral sense of the community.

But, it may be asked, are not practically all great fortunes tainted? Do not our Lord's words "mammon of unrighteousness" apply in a very literal sense to practically all wealth? That is more true, presumably, than many of us have been ready to recognise. The course of events about us is bringing it home more and more every day. Now it is a great telegraph company or a great telephone company which is in illicit partnership with gamblers and making great profits by secretly furnishing them with the news necessary to conduct their nefarious business; and the directors of the companies engaged in this traffic are the solid and highly respected business men of the city and the country, bankers and merchants whose names appear on the lists of all benevolent enterprises. Now an insurance investigation reveals to the astonished public wholesale robbery of widows and orphans by men of wealth, who use the money for speculation, who corrupt legislatures, who contribute funds not their own to the political bosses of either party. Now it is a railroad company convicted of violation of the law and conspiracy with some large mercantile trust for the injury of the public and the benefit of the few, the men who stand at the head of this railroad and direct and permit these things being financial, social, and religious leaders. Here is a railroad, counted the perfection of good management, whose officials are found to be acquiring

wealth by illegal trafficking in coal lands, plundering the public and stock-holders alike, the directors of the road apparently conniving. Here are enormous land frauds: railroads, industrial corporations, and private individuals seizing almost incredibly vast areas of public lands, hundreds and even thousands of men enriching themselves by this wholesale robbery, until in certain sections of the country the possession of any considerable quantity of land creates a presumption of fraud. Here are great mill corporations, with respectable and wealthy men at their heads, whose wealth is partly based on the death or ruin of little children whom they have employed to the destruction of body and soul, because by this cheaper labour they could obtain a greater profit. Here are patent medicines, bad liquor and drugs, distributed to sick or ailing people, under false names and lying pretences, with their results of death and disease, ruined constitutions, drunkenness and the drug habit. There are newspapers deriving profit from the lying advertisements of these things, or even from obscene and immoral advertisements.

The point of it all is not merely that money has been made in this way, but that so many men, counted of the highest respectability, in the best financial, social, and, for that matter, Church standing, should be engaged in these things and should have made their profit from them. Again these men on their part are closely associated financially, socially, and, if one may so speak, spiritually, with a vast number more who have profited with or from them, or been their partners or supporters.

Wealth is so tangled up with this sort of thing that

the designation "unrighteous mammon" is a fair and proper title. But one may say, if wealth is so tainted, what then? Can no church and no college and no institution for good work accept money from these sources? And do you mean to include the men who have acquired wealth in such means altogether in badness, shutting them up from attempting to do any good at all? Very far from it. The objection is to treating such men as though they were saints, receiving and soliciting from them funds in a manner which implies that you regard them as great benefactors, connecting their names with those benefactions, and so helping not only to condone but to blazon abroad their misdeeds, setting before the rising generation success in the acquisition of money as the one thing desirable to achieve honour and distinction here and in the kingdom of heaven hereafter.

The burglar who has robbed a house may give some of the money which he has stolen to benevolent purposes; but you do not tell the man who has stolen $5 and gives fifty cents of it to benevolent purposes that he is a great and noble man, that he is surely going to the kingdom of heaven; and you do not publish his gift in such a way as to make people at large believe that he is righteous. If you believed that a man who offered you a small sum for charitable purposes had obtained that money dishonestly, you would probably refuse to receive it; and if he told you that he wanted to do good and be righteous you would tell him the way to do so was first of all to make restitution, to give back the money to the person from whom he had obtained it by improper means; and if he then

told you that he did not know who the real owners were you would tell him that just the same the money was not his; you might feel at liberty to receive that money for the charitable or benevolent works in which you were concerned, but you would not agree to publish his name as a benefactor.

But not everybody who has tainted wealth has himself put that taint upon his wealth. In point of fact good and bad are so mixed together in our dealings, financial as well as social, that it is not always possible to make sharp distinctions. You may know a person holding stock which is paying a large dividend because the company is despoiling the public. Perhaps it is a public service corporation, which is failing to live up to its obligations and which is exploiting the community by means of its political pull, making life harder for the poor man and the poor woman by exacting higher prices for their light, their heat, their transportation or whatever it may be. That person may have obtained his stock quite legitimately and innocently, and may be quite unaware of the evil-doing of the company in which, through possession of that stock, he is a member. Further, he may be a generous, upright, and benevolent individual, who is doing good with his money. Here you have unrighteous mammon, but you do not have a consciously unrighteous person.

Similarly people inherit money which is ill-gotten, often themselves guiltless, and unconscious that it is ill-gotten. It may come from a father whom they dearly loved and honoured. You would not wish to convince them, if you could, that he was a

bad man. Such people may live beautiful lives and make a use of the money which you feel really atones for the evil done in getting it. We find ourselves constantly in contact or association with things on which there is a taint somewhere, and it is often perplexing to know what to say or do. The more a man of a tender conscience sees of the world about him, the more, I think, our Lord's words "unrighteous mammon" justify themselves to him as literally correct.

But if we are so tangled up with evil in our relation to this world's goods, what are we to do? How are we to use this unrighteous mammon?

Our Lord, in His parable, did not mean to commend the unrighteousness of the steward as a thing for our imitation. He set forth the commendableness of the ingenuity and resourcefulness of the steward, to say to us: This is the way men deal in trying to gain advantage for themselves. Why can not men show an equal ingenuity and resourcefulness in seeking to achieve good? And here is the point of our Lord's sarcasm—for this parable is in a sense sarcastic. Men strive and plan and use their wits to gain for themselves these perishable things and yet, although professing to believe in imperishable things, in a greater and a larger life, how inert, indifferent, and unintelligent they are in the matters that deal with those things and that life which they profess to count the more important.

You see this illustrated in politics. Here is a man whose whole life is devoted to the political game, for the purpose of winning for himself pelf or power. You call him a corrupt politician. You wonder why he

is able to exert such an influence as he does exert, and you are rather inclined to attribute his success and his power to the innate badness of the human nature to which he appeals. Very far from it. That man makes himself the friend and acquaintance of every one in his district. Go and watch his excursion in the summer and you will see something of this. There he stands, ready to greet every man, woman or child that comes on board. He seems to know them all and to be interested in their affairs: he speaks to the women about their babies; very likely he sees that sterilised milk is provided free for the little children. The excursion means, in pleasure and in health, a great deal both to the children and their mothers. But that is only one of a great number of things in which he is concerned. If a man in his district out of work comes to this district politician, he makes it his business to secure him a job. If a man gets into trouble, he appeals to the court for him. If a family is about to be evicted for non-payment of rent, the woman comes to him and very likely he will look out for her. If a man leaves his wife or fails to support her, she applies to the leader. No one who has not been in touch with it understands the amount of time, care, and personal attention which these men give to their constituents, or the number of kind deeds which they do for them. It is through the good they do, not the bad, that they gain their power.

You may say they do all this from a bad motive; it is done simply for their own advantage. Largely that is doubtless true; and at the same time it is impossible for men to be friendly and kindly in this way without

having some well-springs of humanity behind their kindness, or without having some real goodness called out in them by the effort to do these things. But the men who denounce these men and who lead efforts at reform are unfortunately too often, with all their uprightness, lacking both in human sympathy, and also in the readiness to sacrifice their other interests to that work. The ward politician is in his place among his constituents working with them and living with them the year through, winter and summer alike. The man of good character and good position who advocates reform in the city administration is not as a rule ready to give himself or his time in any such way. During a considerable part of the summer he is away altogether, or at least does not live in town. At other seasons he has other interests and duties. Conscientiously as he desires to see better conditions, he does not work for them with his heart and soul like the unjust politician.

The man who makes any given object the aim of his whole life, who throws himself into it with all his force and power, is bound to accomplish something. A man of lesser capacity, full of enthusiasm for a given object, ready to live for it and die for it, will accomplish vastly more than the man of much greater ability to whom the pursuit of that object is a secondary consideration, who does not throw himself into it, who is not willing either to live or to die for it. In the case of politics, of which I have spoken, the ward politician, whom we so often condemn, deserves precisely that commendation which our Lord gave to the unjust steward: "For the children of this world are wiser than the children of light for their own generation." What is true of political

life is true of work done for charitable purposes. There are men and women who throw themselves into charitable work with all their energy, but they are very few and far between. Now such a work requires the greatest skill, love, and devotion. There are those who give all this; but I do not think it is unfair to say that the bulk of those who undertake such work do not do it with the same energy, zeal, and devotion which they would display if they were doing it for a living, if their career depended upon it, their success, their honour, their reputation. They absent themselves from the work for reasons for which they could not and hence would not absent themselves were they paid for what they do. If they had to do it for a livelihood they would do it very differently. That is what our Lord meant by His comparison.

But what, then, shall we do with mammon? Does the Gospel of Jesus Christ mean to take all the joy and beauty out of life? Is there no good in these worldly things? Are they all tainted with evil? Is the world so rotten and corrupt that we must leave it and rush off into the wilderness to live there as hermits, or, dwelling here in the midst of men, are we to forego all their pleasures, to assume an attitude of condemnation, to put away from us all the joy of life, and devote ourselves to renunciation and denunciation? Very, very far from it. Beauty and pleasure are good things. Do you remember how the Gospel tells of the participation of Jesus in the marriage at Cana of Galilee? Do you remember how he associated with such a man as Zacchaeus, a rich man and publican, and as such condemned by his neighbours and his fellow-countrymen

an evil-doer? Jesus was at various times a guest at rich men's tables. He did not refuse to go to their feasts, nor did he tell them that those feasts were wicked; and equally He associated with the publican and the sinner. When a woman, taken in adultery, was brought before Him, how touchingly sympathetic and merciful the Lord was! There is comparatively little of denunciation or of renunciation, in the sense of rejecting these good things of life, in our Lord's words or acts; but He breathes a new spirit into the treatment of it all. Do you remember the story told about the late King Ludwig of Bavaria, the friend of Wagner the musician: how he caused those wonderful musical performances to be given for himself alone? A great theatre, a lavish expenditure of money, and he sitting all alone to hear it, shutting out every one else. He was mad: but there was much in his madness which you see in the attitude of multitudes of men and women who wish to keep their good things to themselves. It is the madness of egoism and selfishness, which, shutting them into themselves, shuts them out from the true joy of life. Take these things and make them the means of equal joy to those about you. Not the renunciation of these things, but such a use of them as shall put new meaning into the life of the man who uses them; their use to promote the well-being, the happiness, the comfort, the joy of those about us.

It would require a new spirit in most men to do this thing? Precisely, a conversion from selfishness to true love. There is the lack. Most of us live our lives for ourselves, and only in a very secondary way consider others.

But people are apt to think, if they do not say it, that the man who lives the life of Christ in this way must become namby-pamby, goody-goody; that he must lose his nerve and muscle, and that his life must be small, colourless and uninteresting

Years ago an Eton lad heard a street boy, a little black-a-boots, ask God to damn him. Shocked, he caught the little fellow and inquired what he knew of God. "Oh! God," said the little fellow, "is the one that sends us to hell." "You are way off the mark," said the Eton boy; but the more he thought of it the less good he felt there was in talking. And so by and bye he had to go and see what these boys were like, why they said such things and how they could be helped out of it. He got an old suit of black-a-boots clothes, so as to be like them, and went down under one of the bridges in London and started a class among them, with a couple of barrels and a candle as his school-house. He was an ordinary sort of a man in most ways, not a man of genius. If he had continued in the common life of his class, probably he would have been a very humdrum sort of a person, content with a small and narrow life and very small and narrow thoughts and hopes and joys. The work to which he gave himself put a new spirit into his life, gave him a new outlook. It meant sacrifice, the giving up of the things which he had been used to, the loss of his social standing, but it meant the finding of something infinitely better. Life became a joy and a delight to him, and he himself became a force in the community.

A couple of years ago there died in this city a man of means, a business man who accomplished certain

reforms and who erected for himself an eternal monument in the changed lives and characters of many young men and women. That man made his home in a tenement house. He lived with and among the people, sharing their life and their pleasures. So he won their confidence. He learned their methods and the evils from which they suffered. His consecration of himself to that work meant, to a very large degree, his separation from the ordinary social relations and conditions of his class; and this resulted not in a narrowing but an enlarging of his life. Anyone who met him felt at once that he was a man worth knowing, a man of force; and he had become so largely by virtue of the work which he was doing and the life he was living among those tenement dwellers. Under other conditions he would probably have been one of the ordinary herd of men.

What our Lord proposes to us is the development of the powers, the possibilities that are in us for great things. He would not have us be content with something small. He opens out to us greater possibilities of joy by opening out greater possibilities of living.

I have taken as my text the words which our Lord added in the conversation that followed the telling of the parable of the unjust steward. The Pharisees derided and mocked at Him. Perhaps some of you are familiar with the little poem by Mrs. Charlotte Perkins Stetson, entitled "Similar Cases," in which she genially caricatures the way in which all reformers and reforms have been scoffed at from the beginning: a little five-toed animal no bigger than a fox, that declared he was going to be a horse, at which the "heavy

aristocracy" of those "days of long ago" first mocked, then grew wrathful, and at last sought to kill the bold reformer, who ran counter to their prejudices and threatened to overturn the foundations of society "in the early eocene." Then there was an anthropoid ape, far smarter than the rest, who was going to be a man and stand upright and hunt and fight. He was going to cut down forest trees and going to build a fire; but his fellow apes pelted him with cocoanuts and arguments. The thing cannot be done, and, in the second place, if it could be done, it had better not be done; and, in the third place, to do it would involve a complete change of nature. Then there was a neolithic man, who, not content with the conditions of his times, looked forward to civilisation, when men should live in cities and life should be turned upside down, and all his comrades rose in fury against their boastful and radical friend; and their final argument was that it was impossible, for this would mean a change in human nature. All reform means a change in human nature, and above all reformers Jesus came to cause and promote a great change in human nature, namely, that man might be in very truth in the image of God and that man might live indeed in the kingdom of heaven.

The writer of St. Luke's Gospel says that the Pharisees scoffed at Jesus because they were covetous, lovers of silver. With all their professions of strictness, their invention of more difficult and minute interpretations of the law, it was self and self-service which lay behind it all; and they were concerned much more with what men thought of them, with their posi-

tion in the world, than with what God thought of them, their position in the kingdom of God. "Ye are they that make yourselves righteous before men, but God knoweth your hearts; because that which is highly esteemed among men is an abomination in the sight of God." The wealth, the fine houses, the beautiful pictures and sculptures, the collections of books, the cultured and refined manners which set a man apart from those about him and lead them to regard him with envy and admiration,—these things, so highly esteemed in the sight of men, are an abomination in the sight of God if and insofar as the man who has them has acquired them and administers them for himself, if and insofar as he is not sharing them, making their advantages felt among men. Society tends to form itself on a selfish model. Who does good for himself him men count great and worthy.

The inclination of worldly society everywhere has been to give the highest rank and place to the man or woman who does not need to work and who does not work, because of what his father, or his grandfather, or, better still, his remote ancestors have achieved and acquired. Now it is a fine thing for any man or woman to be able to look back and say: "My father and my grandfather and my ancestors for many generations before me have done noble things. They have achieved distinction, they have passed down to me a position of honour and power." But this rank or position, which men hold high, is an abomination in the sight of God—if a man or woman rest content with that. There are few things more contemptible than the decayed scion of a noble house who can do

nothing but tell you of the past, because he had himself achieved nothing. The honour of birth involves a great responsibility—that to the achievement of the men of the past the man of the present add his contribution of still higher service. The man or the woman who, having inherited means, is content to do nothing, may be highly esteemed among men, but such a life is an abomination in the sight of God. The value of means thus handed down is that the man or woman set free from the necessity of toiling for the bread he eats may enter into the great glory and happiness of toiling for the uplift of others. This is the use of unrighteous mammon which our Lord means: that men or women who possess birth, place, means, should devote the same energy, ingenuity, zeal, and earnest, hard service to the uplift of those about them which less fortunate persons are compelled to devote to earning a living for themselves and their families.

The rule of God's kingdom is effort and work, not idleness and ease; service and sacrifice, not comfort and indulgence. Some He has set in a position where they must toil and strive with all their might to earn their daily bread. Others He has set in a position where they do not need to toil and strive for their own sustenance. To these latter He has given both a great privilege and a mighty responsibility. The man or woman, set in such a place, who feels himself therefore absolved from the obligation of toil, has mistaken the very meaning of life from God's point of view. That ease and comfort of well-being which win distinction and position in the society of the world are an abomination and an offence in the sight of God.

RESPECTABLES AND PUBLICANS

St. Matthew xxi., 31: The publicans and the harlots go into the kingdom of God before you.

THE conditions under which our Lord is reported to have uttered these words are as follows: When He was teaching in the Temple the chief priests and elders of the people came and demanded the authority by which He spoke. They were the authorised religious chiefs of the people. He was undertaking to give instruction in the Temple. It was natural and proper that they should question into the authority by which He undertook to teach there. In reply He asked them which side they took with regard to the baptism of John. Was it human, or was it God-given? Was John an inspired leader, a prophet sent from God, or was he a misleader, a demagogue or a fanatic? After some questioning among themselves, they answered that they were not prepared to say. They were, to use our colloquial expression, "on the fence." If they were to say that John was not a prophet inspired by God, they could not carry the people with them. On the other hand, if they said that John was an inspired prophet, Jesus could very legitimately ask them why they had not showed themselves his followers. Between the two horns of the dilemma, they took the position of declining to commit themselves. Then

Jesus refused to tell them by what authority He did these things. If they did not know by what authority John spoke, they were incompetent to judge His authority.

Then He addresses to them this very pointed parable: "Once there was a man that had two sons, and he came to the first and said, 'Son, go, work to-day in the vineyard.' He answered and said, 'I will not'; but afterwards he repented and went. He came to the second son and said likewise, and he answered and said, 'I go, sir,' and went not." The publicans and sinners had not kept the law. They were not respectable, but when John came preaching repentance they had flocked out in great numbers and been baptised in the Jordan, confessing and repenting their sins. John had brought them the message of right living, the message of the old prophets, that a man should do justly towards his neighbour and love mercy, and those men who were not respectable, the publicans and sinners, had responded, while the men who claimed to be the religious leaders of the people had given him no support whatsoever.

And Jesus, in His turn, found Himself criticised, opposed, and distrusted by the religious leaders of the people, the priests and the elders, the scribes and the Pharisees. The publicans and sinners heard Him gladly. They became His followers. And so He addresses this scathing denunciation to these religious leaders of the people: "The publicans and the harlots go into the kingdom of God before you. For John came unto you in the way of righteousness, and ye believed him not; but the publicans and

the harlots believed him: and ye, when ye had seen it, repented not afterward, that ye might believe him."

I need scarcely remind you that this is not an isolated utterance. We find the same thing over and over again in our Lord's reported sayings. Now it is the two men praying in the temple. The one is a Pharisee, a respectable, godly Churchman, quite content with the life that he is living, satisfied that he is a good man. There is put into his mouth the prayer which was then, as it is now, the real heart utterance of many such a man; perhaps not what he says in the ears of those about him, or what he actually says in the words which he utters to God, but the thought which lies behind those words, his real prayer, his real manner of address to God, what he thinks of himself, and his idea of what God thinks of him: "Lord, I thank thee that I am not as other men, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this publican. I fast twice in the week, I give tithes of all that I possess." And the publican, standing afar off, would not lift up so much as his eyes unto heaven, but smote upon his breast, saying, "God be merciful to me a sinner!" The publican, our Lord tells us, was the man who was justified in the sight of God, not the Pharisee. The ward politician, the political grafter, if you were to find the corresponding terms and ideas for publican in our life of to-day, was counted righteous rather than the irreproachable Churchman, who knew his Bible, kept the Ten Commandments, went to church and contributed regularly to its support.

The famous parable of the Prodigal Son introduces

you to two brothers. One of them staid at home with his father, and was a decent, respectable member of society. The other was a rake and a vagabond, who squandered all he had in dissipation and at last landed in the gutter. And yet it is for this man that our Lord seems to claim our regard. As the result of the very extremity of his misery, he comes fearfully back to his father's house with the intention of begging to be allowed to work as a hired man. His father falls on his neck and embraces him, treats him with the greatest honour, makes a banquet for him. The decent, respectable elder brother objects. Why, this is a good-for-nothing fellow, who has squandered everything in a most disgraceful life, and yet, just as soon as he comes back, you honour him, bestow your good things on him, treat him in fact as you never treated me. We all feel that there is somehow more chance for that good-for-nothing vagabond than for this hard, stony, self-righteous egoist.

But it is not only in our Lord's parables that we find such teaching. His acts express the same thing. The religious leaders complain of Him, over and over again, as the friend of publicans and sinners. He is quite willing to keep company with and actually to sit down at meat with these low-lived grafters, or even with disreputable women, as though he were their bosom friend. He makes Himself one of their circle. Once, you remember, He was dining at the house of a Pharisee, when a poor, wretched, fallen woman contrived to get in and embrace His feet. You remember how shocked the good Pharisees were at the occurrence and at Jesus' attitude towards her. Either He did not

seem to know what sort of a woman she was, or else He did not seem to care. Then, you recollect, He explained to Simon the situation from His point of view. Simon had invited Him to dinner, apparently just to satisfy his curiosity and that of his friends, and then grossly insulted Him. The other guests he had greeted with the ordinary kiss of welcome. He had given them water to wash their feet. But Jesus was not of his class, and in the selfishness and egotism of his social respectability he could not quite bring himself to treat Him as he treated the guests of his own sort. He had stabbed Him just where men are most sensitive, in His feelings, making Him evident as an inferior. Now that is one of the most cruel things that a man or a woman can do. It hurts more than if you had struck a man a blow. Nobody who is full of real, tender, human sympathy can do such a thing as that. Any one who has the real spirit of brotherliness in him must involuntarily put himself in the place of others and treat them as he would like to be treated himself. The egoist does not do this because he thinks only of himself. This man, of the same race and the same religion as Jesus, His brother, a son of Abraham, like Him one of the chosen people of Israel, invited Him to dinner, and there, in the presence of all the guests, treated Him in this insulting manner. Then there comes a poor, sinful creature, who has gotten in somehow, throws herself at His feet, kisses them in an agony of devotion, bathes them with her tears and wipes them with the hair of her head. Which is the better to Him? To which must His heart go out; and to which does the heart of God go out?

"He who does not love his brother whom he has seen, how shall he love God whom he has not seen?"

That social question—how it comes in! You have another story of how Jesus was invited to a Pharisee's house. Now, Jesus was a plain man of the people. He did not know the niceties of the social etiquette of the "four hundred" of His day, and so it came about that He did not follow their rule of the formal ablution of the hands before dinner. But that was the all-important thing in their eyes. The man who did not know their manners and their customs was not a gentleman. They had no ears for anything that He might say, no eyes for anything that He might do after that: that damned Him in their sight.

I might go on indefinitely multiplying instances. The Gospel is full of them. Turn to the end. At last it was the respectable, church-going, God-fearing leaders of the people, the chief priests and the elders and the scribes and Pharisees who put Him to death on the Cross; and the one man that stood by Him there was an outcast, a criminal, a thief. It is a most pitiful tale: the multitude mocking and scoffing at Him: "If thou be the Christ, the King of Israel, come down from the Cross!" It is easy to follow the crowd. Most of us do it. Partly our judgment is carried away by the contagion of their action, partly we are, most of us, moral cowards; we do not dare to stand up all by ourselves against the multitude. And so one of the thieves crucified with Him began to rail at Him and mock at Him like the rest: "If thou be the Christ, come down from the Cross; if thou be the Christ, save thyself and us!" The other thief rebuked him. They

indeed deserved their condemnation, but this man had done nothing worthy of death. That thief might have been a bad man, he might have committed many crimes, but he had not lost the spirit of true manliness. He dared to stand up against the multitude; and what is more, he had not lost that which is the most divine thing in man, the spirit of sympathy and love. I think that people make a mistake when they suppose this thief to have been converted on the Cross, in the sense that he there recognised Jesus as the Christ who was expected, the King of Israel. He was converted in the sense that he recognised the needs of the man suffering there by his side, that he forgot himself and his own suffering in the needs of some one suffering more than he was, that he put himself in that man's place with the truest and deepest sympathy. That man supposed He was a King? Then he would recognise Him as a King now, when He so sorely needed that support for the preservation of some shred of His self-respect. And so he asks Jesus to remember him when He comes into His kingdom. That is the truest conversion: not the conversion to the name but the conversion to the spirit of Jesus. And so it was that Jesus could answer that poor criminal, "This day shalt thou be with me in paradise." It was precisely of such men, in spite of all their faults and crimes, that His kingdom should be formed.

And there you have the very foundation of the matter, the reason why Jesus shows this apparent sympathy with the publican and sinner over against the respectable man. It is not that respectability is an objectionable thing. Very much the opposite: it is

eminently a good thing and a thing to be desired. A man ought to keep all the Commandments: Thou shalt not kill; thou shalt not commit adultery; thou shalt not steal. He ought not to do any of these things, and he ought not to do many more besides and he is a very much better man because he does not do them, and the world is very much better as it learns not to do these things. But if a man do none of these things and yet have not love, to use St. Paul's term, "It profiteth him nothing." He is not in the kingdom of heaven. He cannot enter into the joy of life eternal. The man that has broken these Commandments and yet in whom the spirit of love is not dead is a better man than he. These other things are only the case, to guard that treasure of love. The real thing is love, and the danger of respectability is just this, that it is apt to concern itself with the case. It builds it up and adorns it and fastens it up so tight that it never can be opened, no breath of air can ever get in, and the spirit of love for which the case was meant is choked to death.

You find something of this exaltation of the case at the expense of, or even to the destruction of its contents in every phase of the history of our religion. Jesus came to reveal God to men as the God of love, to leave with men that spirit of love which should lead them to Him and to the Father. You have in the Bible a record of it all, the story of how, through generation after generation and century after century, the Spirit of God was brooding over men and stirring men's hearts to seek righteousness and mercy. You see a spiritual life growing from small beginnings, developing, line upon line, precept upon precept. It is a long and

tedious struggle, a thousand years of it and more, until a wonderful religion has grown up. And then the religious leaders want to stop this development and call a halt. The dead record of what has been becomes their religion: and when a live prophet, like John the Baptist or Jesus the Christ, comes preaching the living word of God, those leaders of the Church cannot understand it. They are concerned with preserving the case in which they have shut up and are stifling the spirit of the prophets of long ago. They have forgotten that there is anything within that case; it has become the real thing to them. John opens the lid and reveals the live spirit within. But they do not see the spirit, they do not care for that. They are only distressed that the lid of their precious treasure case is opened, they want to close it. They do not perceive the divine in John's message. So, also, when Jesus comes they cannot hear the word of God in His words, they cannot feel the breath of the Spirit in His teaching.

Time passes, and the Christian Church makes a similar experience. I think that to-day, and among us, even, there are men and women who let the Bible stand between them and Jesus Christ. To others, it is creeds, sacerdotal order, or the sacraments which have come between them and Christ. The sacraments are the outward form through which the inner life should be given. But what a ghastly irony there was in the profession of true belief in those sacraments by people who were murdering one another because they did not agree about the explanation of them! The explanation had become more valuable than the sacrament.

So it has been with sacerdotal order, so it has been with creeds and formularies; and the more beautiful your creeds and formularies, the greater, I had almost said, the danger. And just because we have such beautiful creeds and formularies, such noble forms and ceremonies, we of the Protestant Episcopal Church are especially in danger of letting our respectability and decency in these matters become a case to seal up and suffocate the spiritual life.

But religion does not consist only in those things which you and I call by the name of religion. Our real religion is that which we practise in our lives. Perhaps I might say that the thing which is most real, most precious to you, is in reality your religion; it may be social forms, it may be money-getting, but that is really your religion. We do not always realise just what our religion is.

One day I was dining with the Turkish governor of an outlying province on the edge of the desert. In fact I had just come in from the desert and had as guide and companion an Arab tribesman. At dinner there was the usual central dish on the table, from which we were all to help ourselves. The governor and my Arab tribesman helped themselves with their hands out of the dish. There on the border the governor was in all his habits and uses like the Arab tribesman; only he knew that his customs in these regards were different from the customs in the centres of civilisation, and so he felt it necessary to make some explanation, which explanation consisted in telling me that he too knew how to eat with a spoon like a Frank, but that it was his religion to eat with his fingers. That is, it was his

tradition, the etiquette he was used to, it was bred in him, so that it would be a shock and an offence to him to do something different. Now that was a true use of the word religion, even if an unconscious one. The clothes we wear, the manners with which we greet one another, the way in which we eat our food, become to us tests of our own worth and the worth of those about us. It is necessary and desirable that we should have forms, customs, etiquette; but these things are after all but the case, and the continual danger is lest we make them the real thing and thus seal up and finally suffocate the life which is the treasure the case was meant to protect and preserve. It is precisely this sort of respectability, both in what we commonly call our religion, and also in that greater and broader religion of the traditions and customs and habits of our daily life, the substituting of the dead outward case for the live thing within, which is the danger we must avoid. If you stifle that spirit of life and love in the case of respectability, then you inevitably develop a cold, hard, selfish, unsympathetic nature, both in the individual and in the community.

The mere "Do not do this," "Do not do that," of the commandments of respectability, is eminently selfish. Do not do it, why? Because the doing of it will throw you out of society, will bring punishment upon you, will prevent your development? Those are entirely selfish motives, and however good the thing you do or do not do is in itself, the selfish motive of mere respectability with which you do it will ultimately harden your heart and prevent the true development of the divine nature within you. Do, or abstain from

doing those things, for another motive, because to murder, to commit adultery, to steal is to bring suffering or harm or loss on some one else or on the community; do or abstain from doing them for another's sake and there is developed in you more and more of that divine spirit of love and compassion which leads to a higher and greater righteousness, to a living, quickening righteousness. It was against that selfishness and hollowness and unreality of the religious forms and practices of the religious leaders of His day that our Lord was so constantly protesting. Your respectable man does the thing just because it is the correct thing. He rests on the basis of what people say, what people do, what people think. He tries to conform to the proper use. He would not like to do anything that is out of the ordinary form and custom. He never can let himself go, he never can be really himself. Indeed it is very doubtful whether he has a self; he is the echo of what he sees and hears about him.

Among the delights of my childhood was a book called, I think, *Arabian Days*, a translation, I judge, of some German work. Out of that book I remember one story to this day. I had no idea of its moral at the time, but it was its moral which really fixed it in my mind and brings it to my remembrance. It was evidently written in the days of Anglo-mania in Germany, after the revolutionary period of 1848. Everybody sought to do what was English, to wear English clothes, to have English manners, drink tea after the English fashion, etc., etc.; and nobody was esteemed anything in the little town in which the story was laid unless he imitated the English in some

manner. A certain cynical gentleman, disgusted by the unreality of all this, introduced to the community, as his guest, a young Englishman, a somewhat uncouth looking individual, with a hairy face and strange manners and ungainly gestures, who could not speak the German language. Nevertheless, every one was charmed to hear his strange utterances; and, as for his manners, why, the very roughness of them proved him to be of the best English type; and forthwith every one hastened to imitate his dress, his tone, his bearing, his eccentricities. He was guilty of strange excesses, but these were not only condoned, they were imitated. At last, one day, his cynical host disappeared, leaving the young Englishman and a note behind. The young Englishman proved to be an ape which he had half-way trained into the semblance of humanity. It is a cynical story, and yet it is true that many people would think the manners and even the religion of an ape quite the right thing to imitate, if only he were properly introduced.

People are apt to read the Bible without a sufficient reference of its words and its teachings to their own time and their own individual case. You and I, respectable and God-fearing Churchmen of to-day, are quite confident that we have nothing in common with the chief priests and the elders, the scribes and the Pharisees of our Lord's day. Our religion is different from theirs. We would never put any one to death who came among us and taught us righteousness. No, we would not, because Christianity has so far softened our civilisation and enlarged our comprehension that those days of persecution and execution

are past, at least in this country (although it must be remembered that on the whole Christianity persecuted both outsiders and its own heretics more cruelly and more remorselessly than Judaism persecuted Jesus and His followers in the early days, and that even to-day Christianity in many countries has not passed out of the persecuting stage). We of this country have been so far softened and so far broadened by the lofty and lovely teachings of Jesus that we would not persecute Him if He appeared among us to-day. We know it, because we would not persecute any one who preached righteousness, however much we might laugh at him or mock him. It does not follow, however, that we would hear Him or become His followers. It does not follow that we would not mock and deride Him and persecute Him with our tongues. We would do so just so surely as we make the outward act, the outward form, the outward custom the thing of importance, that by which we determine our life and our relations to those about us, whether in the narrower sphere of religion in worship and belief or the broader sphere of religion in life to which I referred a moment since.

What is it that determines your choices in life,—your friendships, your admirations? Are you keenly alive to beauty of character? Does your heart go out towards the people that are striving for the noble and the good, who are giving themselves in service and sacrifice? Are you in the current of that life of love?

How often we meet so-called Christian people, highly respectable people, who are striving with all their might to keep up appearances. They must do as their neighbours do, that is, those particular neighbours who set the

pace they try to follow. They must try to live like them, dress like them, entertain, if they can, like them, or at least make a proper appearance at their entertainments. They must live after a certain fashion, in a certain part of the town. They live up to the edge of their income and the edge of their strength and time,—all their money, strength, and time must be devoted to keeping up appearances. To the others that life may be no strain. They are more comfortably placed it may be in worldly goods; but just because they are better off, therefore, these others are imitating them and striving to be like them. You meet hundreds of such people, who are throwing their lives away in the pursuit of egotism and selfishness, stifling every higher thing within them that they may be "respectable." They lose the reality of life in seeking after the sham. We have hundreds of these people in our churches, who do nothing, who are nothing. They say the Creed, they profess their belief, they contribute what they absolutely have to contribute as a matter of respectability toward the expenses of the Church. If it is the correct thing, they take some part in the activities of the Church. They do it as a form and think that is all that is necessary. They are respectable and self-righteous. It is of just such people as this that our Lord uttered those scathing, awful words of the text: "The publicans and harlots go into the kingdom of God before you."

But that text goes further still. You have often heard it said, because it has become a sort of fashionable thing to say, that if you go into a working-men's meeting you will find that the name of Jesus Christ

rouses enthusiasm, while the name of the Church calls forth execrations. That is an exaggeration, a very great exaggeration; but there is enough truth behind it to make us who call ourselves Christians stop and think. We call the Church the body of Christ. Does it really represent that tender, sympathetic life of Jesus Christ?

The Church consists of its individual members. Are we, you and I, trying to lead that life? Does our religion consist in a personal relation to Jesus, or is it the saying of formularies, the performance of rites, the maintenance of a respectable relation? Jesus was, so far as we can learn, a careful observer of the Church's laws and forms. He went to the feasts at Jerusalem, He went regularly to the synagogue on the Sabbath day. He constantly quoted and referred to the Scriptures. They were His text-book which He studied and held in reverence. But while that is true, He stood in an attitude of opposition to the leaders of the Church. He became a leader of the great mass of the unchurched, of the publicans and the sinners. He addressed Himself to the leaders of the Church in language which, if you appreciate its full force, is startling and revolutionary. If a man were to use it to-day with regard to the clergy of the Christian Church, or the wardens and vestrymen in our churches, we should not put him to death, but we should cry out in horror and we should probably put him out of the Church.

Now I have no further lesson to draw for you from this utterance of our Lord, except simply to set it before you and say that it behooves you and me to

study just such utterances, to study His words, His acts, His life, not as something remote and far away, but as though it were all happening here among us to-day. We respectable Churchmen are always in great danger of being choked with egotism and selfishness, of losing that which is real and substituting for it a mere sham.

REVOLUTIONARY CHRISTIANITY

St. Matthew xx., 16: So the last shall be first, and the first last: for many be called but few chosen.

YOU cannot define the kingdom of God in terms of business service. It is not a legal proposition nor a business proposition. It is a question of the relation of man to God, a question of a man's entering into the spirit of God and the love of God. Whoever does that, however he does it, whensoever he does it, enters into the kingdom and shares in the glory and the reward of that kingdom. The kingdom of God is revolutionary, in that it reverses the common conceptions of men, Jews and non-Jews alike, on which they base the practice of their religion and their life.

The national religious idea was not confined to the Jews. It merely received a somewhat different development and interpretation among them. The fundamental conception of a Greek state limited the rights and privileges of that state to a certain number of citizens. This limitation was really part of the religious as well as the national conception of the Greek state. As over against the outside world the outlook of the Greeks is well shown in the name which they applied to all non-Greeks,—barbarians. They had nothing in common with them. They looked down upon them and despised them. The Roman took the

same attitude, and though in the latter years of the republic and in the empire men not Romans might acquire the citizenship of Rome, yet that very fact only helps to emphasise the attitude of the Roman toward the non-Roman world. Dominion belonged to the Roman. Others were meant to work for him, to be subject to him. For the Roman there was one law, for the non-Roman another law. Between the two there was a barrier. Similarly the Jew regarded himself as alien from and superior to all other peoples. This idea of difference and superiority developed with him in a way somewhat different from that in which it developed among Greeks and Romans, but the principle was the same. The Jews supposed themselves to be the chosen people of God, different from all the nations of the earth. Not only through the Jew, but in the Jew was to be established God's kingdom here upon earth. With him the idea of difference took on more distinctly the racial and religious character. The nation with him meant race and religion to a degree which was not true in the case of the Greek or the Roman. The very lack of a real national existence helped to develop this idea. Downtrodden, despised by all, the Jew solaced himself by dwelling more and more upon his peculiar relation to the Divinity and looking forward to the day when God should recognise that relation by placing the other nations under his feet.

The whole idea is an unlovely one. It is selfish and egotistic, whether held by Greek, by Roman, or by Jew, and in whatever variation it may express itself. The fundamental teaching of our Lord contradicted

and reversed this doctrine. The first words of the prayer which He left to all the world as a heritage give the lie to that conception of particularity. God is "our Father" and we are all His children, and all, therefore, brothers one of another. The Messianic kingdom, for which His apostles were looking, was not the kingdom into which He would bring the Jews alone. Any one whom He found ready to answer the call to come and work with Him should be a partaker of that kingdom. I have said that our Lord's doctrine of the kingdom of God was revolutionary. To some extent the revolution He proclaimed has taken place; but even yet men are far from regarding one another as brothers. Christianity, nominally accepting the theory of one Father in heaven, soon developed lines of distinction. The Christian came to anathematise and persecute the non-Christian, and then the orthodox Christian came to persecute and anathematise the heterodox Christian. In Russia to-day there are not the same laws for the orthodox and the unorthodox, much less for the Christian and the Jew. Russia only continues the conditions which prevailed so long over all the earth and indeed, to some extent, still prevail. As of old Greek law was different for the Greek and non-Greek, Roman law for the Roman and non-Roman, and Jewish right for the Jew and Gentile, so in Christendom the law was different for Christian and Jew or even for orthodox and unorthodox Christian. And where this religious difference has been broken down, still the idea of brotherhood does not prevail.

To take us people of the Anglo-Saxon race, for instance, the conception which our Lord taught of our

one Father is still revolutionary. We do not believe that the Indian is our brother, that the Chinamen and the Japanese are our brothers, that the negroes are our brothers, or even that the Jews are our brothers. We look down upon them as aliens and inferiors. We make laws which classify them as such or we make social distinctions which emphasise our opinion of their inferiority. We of the Anglo-Saxon race, masterful and conquering, convinced of the superiority of our type and of our civilisation, have practically made a religion of that civilisation and that type. We accept the kingdom of God on Anglo-Saxon lines and for Anglo-Saxon people just as truly as the Jew accepted it on Jewish lines and for the Jewish people. We would exclude every one else just as the Jews would have excluded all but Jews. We expect to have the dominion over other races. We of this country have modified our Anglo-Saxon blood by huge infusions of the blood of other races, but in doing it we have so assimilated those races to ourselves, to our own civilisation and our own type, that they have become in reality Anglo-Saxon. It is the instinct of a conquering and dominant race to regard those who cannot keep its pace, who cannot adopt its ways, its civilisation, its manners, and its appearance, as its inferiors.

It is strange to think that in the world's history we who were once the last have become the first. Our ancestors were backward barbarians, unintelligent, considered incapable of acquiring culture and civilisation, for centuries and millenniums after other races and other nations had developed culture and civilisation. Races whose very type has been lost, which

as races have vanished off the face of the earth, built cities, organised states, developed agriculture and commerce, cultivated art and literature, while our ancestors lived like wild beasts as far below the civilised races of that day as the negroes of Central Africa are to-day below the standards of civilisation of our own country. Even negroid peoples were among the leaders of progress and civilisation when our ancestors had not yet emerged from the lowest depths of barbarism. And in the Indo-European stock to which we belong our own race was one of the last to take on civilisation, to prove itself capable of advance and progress, of assuming responsibility. We, the proudest and most masterful of races, are among the latest comers. It took thousands of years to develop our backward intelligence, our lower intellectual and moral sense; and now we who were last are first. Is it possible that there is still another last which shall become first in our stead? Is there some race which we now regard as incapable of civilisation, backward beyond hope of progress, materially and intellectually, which has developed so slowly because it is finally to achieve still greater things than those our Anglo-Saxon race has achieved? There have been strange revolutions in the history of the world. Many first have become last and last first; and the end is not yet.

Is there, then, one may ask, no justification for the conception that Israel was a people chosen of God? Yes, it was chosen by God in a sense which the second portion of the book of Isaiah beautifully sets forth. It was chosen to work with God for the nations, to give itself and all it had for the good of the world,

to suffer with God and for God in the cause of humanity. It was a great and glorious mission, to which Israel has been unfaithful just in so far as it has conceived of itself as a separate people and looked down upon or been hostile to the Gentiles. The same mission, I take it, has come now, in God's good time, to our race and our people. Kipling, I think it was, invented the phrase "the white man's burden." If it be rightly understood, that conception is a glorious one—our strength, our intelligence, our thrift, our energy, our power and masterfulness are ours that we may bless the world by bearing the burden of our red and black and brown and yellow brothers. This is not a mission, however, which can be carried out by force, by going to the black men in South Africa or in the Congo Free State or in our own country and compelling them to work, treating them one minute as inferior to us and the next moment demanding of them a conformity to our standards of thrift and morality. We have a vast deal to learn from Christ before we can fulfil that mission, and we can never fulfil it until in reality we regard them as our brothers.

But it is not only in matters national, religious, and racial that men make such ungodly distinctions. In Rome there were patricians and plebeians, parts of the same people and yet with different laws applying to each, the one possessing certain privileges and immunities which the other did not have; and that which was true of Rome was true of Europe through the whole Middle Ages and is, to some extent, true of it now. Men like to claim for themselves privileges and immunities, and it is difficult to make them understand that

this is wrong and injurious both to themselves and to those whom they thus rob and oppress. In this country we have endeavoured to realise more nearly the Christian standard by legal and constitutional provisions that there shall be no privileged class; but although there is no hereditary privileged class, you find that what is sometimes called human nature has proved stronger than grace; that a privileged class tends to exist here among us, theories and laws to the contrary notwithstanding. The tendency among us, outside of that one unchristian race prejudice to which I have already referred, is to create privilege by means of wealth and for the purpose of amassing wealth. How the possession of something which others do not possess affects our minds! Observe a little child dressed up in its best clothes. While those best clothes tend to bring out a certain respectability and decorum in the child's manner and behaviour, which is part of the reason why we give it the clothes, they also tend to develop in it a most unholy priggishness and self-righteousness. A child who in its ordinary work-a-day clothes stands in healthy democratic relations towards its fellows, who is not noticeably conceited, or self-satisfied that it is better than others, is converted into a most offensive little aristocrat when you have dressed it up. It contemplates its own superiority to those about it and is filled with selfishness and egotism. Now the same thing which you have observed over and over again in a little child is true of humanity at large. It is extraordinary what a change takes place in us with the change of our conditions, even in the matter of clothing.

The possession of material goods greatly in excess of his neighbour exerts upon the ordinary man a disastrous moral effect. Many of you may have had occasion to observe this in individuals or communities. You have seen people in very simple circumstances ready and able to give personal attention to the need of their neighbours, to receive into their houses people who required shelter, nursing, and the like. You may have seen the same people raised to what they conceived to be a different condition of life, possessed of much more abundant means. If so, you will have observed that as a result of those changed conditions it generally becomes impossible for them to do the things which they had done before. A gift of money takes the place of the service which they formerly rendered. It is not practicable for them to take those who are in need or suffering into their houses now, or to adopt and rear as their own children forsaken or bereft of parents. You all know or have heard of the various organisations which undertake to find homes for deserted and homeless children. A great work of this sort was done by Barnardo in London. A couple of years since I was in Cape Breton at the time when a shipload of Barnardo's waifs was brought into the country. The people who adopted them and took them into their homes to rear them as their own were poor, plain, simple people, nor were they always childless people. The people who, you would have supposed, from their circumstances in life, were better able to assume such responsibilities, people with more means and often with smaller families, were not the ones to whom it seemed desirable or possible to take these children. It is

only one example of that which you see all around you in life—the barrier which the possession of goods builds up about us, which prevents us from doing those acts of brotherly love which persons of small means may do, which makes us a class apart from those with less of this world's goods than we have, until we have come to conceive of ourselves and them as different classes.

This has made itself very distinctly felt in the Church of God, and we find among us to-day class churches, or rather the inclination of all our churches is to become class churches. We are a class church in the training of our clergy, and in the social position to which we assign them; we are a class church in the organisation of our vestries, of our conventions, of our governing bodies in general, and we are a class church in our arrangements for worship. Some of our most distinctively class churches are, it is true, distinguished for their great gifts to missions, by their noble contributions for eleemosynary and benevolent institutions. Some of them spend large sums in building chapels, settlements, mission houses, and the like in the poorer quarters of the city, providing crèches, kindergartens, visitors, nurses, and much more to help to lighten the burden of need; but so long as they contrive to segregate themselves from those masses with whom they deal, they have missed the better part. Their wealth and their respectability form a barrier about them which renders it impossible to deal with these others as with brothers with whom they gather together in one Father's house. They lack that very association and sympathy which are worth all gifts of money, and which constitute the very essence of that relation of brother-

hood among men which is set forth in the life and Gospel of Jesus Christ.

"Many first shall be last and last first." It is a revolutionary utterance and revolutionary to-day in reference to the attitude of our Christian people and our Christian churches toward their brothers. Yes, we tend to develop class here in America, class founded on success in worldly things, on wealth. In our governmental, in our social, in our religious relations we recognise practically, if not theoretically, this class distinction. If you will question the ordinary men about you or observe their acts you will see that this conception of class is inbred in the great mass of our people. The very policeman who arrests an offender, when he finds that offender to be a man of means, assumes a different attitude toward him. Not that he is ordered to do so, not that he expects a bribe for doing so, but the possession of wealth throws around that man in his eyes, as in the eyes of the great mass of the people from whom he comes, an invisible halo which sets him apart from other men. And the rich man holds the same opinion about himself as the inevitable result of the attitude which the community takes toward success as expressed in terms of wealth. Towards this prevailing attitude of mind our Lord's words are as revolutionary to-day as they were 1900 years ago in Palestine with regard to that national conception of what was pleasing in God's sight, what constituted God's elect. I suppose that at the last day, when we stand before the Judge, some of us who have won success here and have proudly told the tale of that success or heard it told by others will say:

"I was a poor boy. I began with nothing. I made my own way by thrift and honest toil, by doing with all my might the work I had to do, by using my hours of leisure for extra work or for study. By my own intelligence and inventive power, by my own energy and force of character I made my way and have acquired great wealth. I took advantage of every opportunity that was before me to increase my holdings. I saw that it was possible to co-ordinate different interests, to save friction and loss resulting from unnecessary competition. I outstripped my duller, less energetic, and more conservative competitors. They dropped out of the race, they were compelled to abandon their business because they could not compete with the new methods and the new ways. I brought a new spirit into the trade and created a new epoch in the organisation of industries. I hold the first place among the business men of my day."

I take it that this plea for a place in the kingdom of God will be counted at the last day very partial and one-sided. What is asked is not merely whether the man had the ability and power, the energy and self-control to succeed, but whether he conceived of those powers as Christ conceived of His divine power, as something given of God, not that He might turn stones to bread for the satisfaction of His own needs, not that He might win for Himself the kingdoms of the earth, not that He might cause the gaping crowds to look upon Him with marvel and with wonder as a creature different from themselves, but that, as a brother among brothers, He might serve His fellow men, standing with them and among them, not apart from them. Many

whom men count first shall be last and many whom men count not successful, precisely because they have not been willing to use their powers for their own aggrandisement, shall be first in the kingdom of God.

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